

ALEJO CARPENTIER, GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ, SALMAN RUSHDIE:
THREE MOMENTS IN THE PROBLEMATICS OF MAGIC REALISM

BY
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Abstract

Chapter One begins by outlining the space magic occupies in Western culture, clarifying what I mean by the term "magic". I examine aspects of indigenous American sacred traditions which have influenced and which prefigure magic realism. I review the development of the aesthetic in its Latin American context, touching on the Chronicles, the role of nationalism and erotic rhetoric, the influence of European modernism and the role of the intellectual in Latin American society.

Chapter Two examines the development of a realist aesthetic in Europe since the Enlightenment. This review of its manifestations and counter-traditions in European culture is founded upon a discussion of aspects of the philosophy of Kant. I focus on the influence of Surrealism which is particularly illuminating of Latin American magic realism. The impacts of anthropology and psychoanalysis on Latin American writers are also reviewed. Chapter Two includes a review of formulations of magic realism influential in the field of English studies and concludes with a working definition which is used as a basis for the discussions of the three novels analysed in this study.

Chapter Three is a study of the development of Alejo Carpentier's version of magic realism culminating in the writing of The Kingdom of this World in 1949. Through using both European and indigenous American techniques and perspectives he hoped to create a literature which could represent the complex realities of Latin American life and establish a mythology for the founding of a unified Latin American identity. He believed there to be a substantive magical dimension to Latin American reality and hoped

to found that identity on this common ground. He could not.

Chapter four focusses on Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude. Márquez's magic realism is an aesthetic strategy which can contain (but not resolve) the opposing discourses of the magical and of Enlightenment realism, revealing both the fantastical and motivated nature of much realism, and criticizing the potential fatalism and inflexibility of magical traditions at the same time. Márquez's magic realism entails the recognition that "unitary, orthodox language has broken down" (Fuentes in Rushdie 1991; 420). This does not mean, for Márquez, that there is not a "Latin American reality" which still requires to be depicted. While the novel registers the strain of containing both Melquíades' and Gabriel Márquez's visions of Colombian/Latin American reality, it does not explode into a mass of disparate but overlapping realities. There is still that undefinable underlying magical dimension.

For Rushdie, writing in the cosmopolitan city of London in the nineteen-eighties, any sense of a supra-national, continental identity has disappeared. Rushdie's focus is less on achieving more realistic or inclusive representations of a particular "reality" than on the question of interpretation per se. Magic is part of the way individuals (influenced, certainly, by certain styles of interpretation) experience reality and should not be abstracted to become an absolute, privileged source of authority. What Rushdie's magic realism retains from that of writers like Carpentier and Márquez is the concern with the political forces which determine and prescribe and proscribe our interpretations of the world which, protean as it may be, we all inhabit.

INTRODUCTION

One of the reasons I embarked on this study was that, fascinated and not a little inspired by my first exposure to magic realism (I read Salman Rushdie's Shame (1984) as part of an undergraduate course), my efforts to arrive at a useful definition of the label through reference material was wholly unsuccessful and not a little confusing. For a start, in South Africa there just is not much material available on the topic beyond passing references by authors (who usually complain about the confusion of ways in which the term is used). Further, most dictionaries and glossaries of literary terms seem to avoid "magic realism" (for instance A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms (a revised and enlarged edition) edited by Roger Fowler which appeared in 1987, and A Glossary of Literary Terms (fifth edition) by M.H. Abrams which appeared in 1988), despite that fact that Gabriel García Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude (1967)--he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982--is generally referred to as a "magic realist" novel. Further, Salman Rushdie's novel Midnight's Children (1982), also a patently magic realist text, won the Booker Prize in that year.

The problem is that journalistic overkill and opportunistic uses of the term have rendered it almost meaningless. This is especially true with regard to Latin American fiction, to which it has and continues to be applied with a cavalierist imprecision. Indeed, it has become a useful "catch-all" in which to lump all "Third World"

* fiction which has a degree of literary sophistication and yet employs decidedly "non-Western" (magical/mythical/oral) discourses and devices. The term is also used to refer to a number of European writers who display marked mystical dimensions in their literary visions, and those who create po-faced accounts of marvellous events. Thus Salman Rushdie, Alejo Carpentier, Ben Okri, Franz Kafka, Günther Grass, Italo Calvino and Herman Hesse have all been characterised as magic realists.

As a South African of European ethnic descent, I was intrigued by the aesthetics of a rather specific form of magic realism. I was interested in magic realism as a means of writing about a country comprising a multitude of world-views and ethnic groups. Rushdie seemed particularly aware in Shame of the difficulties of writing representatively about Pakistan and India as a novelist resident in England and writing in English. However, I grew up in Natal which has a large Indian population, and Rushdie's writing struck me as being very "Indian" in the intensity of its passion, in the richness of its invention, in its sheer volatile profusion and its registers of conversationality, intimacy and melodrama.

I also grew up amongst Zulus, who have a very oral culture, and have a father who is a great spinner of yarns, and I identified very much with Rushdie's engaging and yet very carefully structured writing. The richness of his writing appealed to me in contrast to the dry unblinking humanitarianism and the (often bleak) elegiac pastoral lyricism of many of our "creolle" writers. In this light it is interesting to note a movement toward a magic realist

approach in recent times by South African novelists like Andre Brink, Ivan Vladislavić and Christopher Hope.

The principal difference between Rushdie and someone like myself, of course, is that he is--at least by birth--an Indian. By this I mean he was born to Indian parents. In his novels Shame and Midnight's Children he seemed to write about an ethnically--though religiously, linguistically, politically and socially virulently fragmentary--relatively coherent group of people. As a South African of mixed European origin I am faced with a country comprising predominantly indigenous African ethnic groupings, with a European population, an Asian population and a mestizo population. Rushdie's writing seemed so shot through with Indian influences, I wondered where a "creolle" in my position could begin.

Thus I was intrigued to discover Rushdie's interest in Latin America (see for instance his account of his visit to Nicaragua entitled The Jaguar's Smile (1987)), and even more so the literary debt he has acknowledged he owes to the novels of the Colombian writer Gabriel García Márquez. In Latin American magic realists like Alejo Carpentier and Márquez I found novelists who were grappling with a predicament in some ways much more similar to someone in my position than was Rushdie in writing Shame and Midnight's Children.

Further, in magic realism I perceived a rich tradition in literature which could be traced back through European modernism, through Post-Enlightenment Romantic traditions in Western thought,

which was cross-fertilised with the literary and political preoccupations of Latin America feeding back via the slave-routes to Africa and through the initial discovery of the Americas by Columbus into the emergence of Spain as a totalitarian nation-state. There was a satisfying symmetry in this for me, as I have Spanish blood in me and feel quite close in spirit to much Spanish writing, painting, architecture and music. The connection with Africa speaks for itself, and we shall see that both Carpentier and Márquez are very aware of African cultural influences in Latin America. Further, Rushdie's central concern with Islam found an echo in the major impact of Muslim civilization on the West, which was exerted through Muslim Spain.

Finally, writing as a South African at this crucial juncture of our country's history, one is confronted with the necessity of reassessing one's ideas of culture and 'nationness'. One is faced with the enormous task of imagining a nation out of the fragmented and ethnically-defined communities bred by the system of Apartheid, a nation which will be formally recognised by the end of April of this year. It is very late in the century to be building a nation. We live in a land where the intelligentsia are suspicious of religion and myth. We live in a land in which a great deal of demolition work has to be done on the myths of the past, on the beliefs and fears spawned by apartheid in its myriad forms, if anything like a unified nation is to be created for its peoples. And yet to create this nation tales must be told, powerful narratives used to forge unity (not uniformity).

My three chosen novelists all engage in the attempt to discover an aesthetic which can articulate the complexities of a community which embraces the very old and the very new, the primal and the modern, magical and rationalist interpretations of reality. One cannot understand their projects without a grasp of the historical contexts in which they were played out. Further, to avoid the kind of loose terminology which initiated my study, I have attempted to define my use of the terms "magic" and "realism" and detail some of the long history of their confrontations and interrelations in European and Latin American cultures. In particular, an undefined usage of the "magic" element of the term magic realism has occasioned loose definitions of the term. After describing some of the historical and cultural detail necessary to understanding the magic realism of the authors I examine in Chapters One and Two, I conclude the more theoretical and contextual part of my thesis with a formulation of this aesthetic in the latter part of Chapter Two. I then move on to textual analyses of the novels, ranged in chronological order. In these chapters I analyze the ways in which their authors employ magic realism in the context of the historical moments in which they were written.

I have come to see my chosen three novels, Carpentier's The Kingdom of this World (1949), Gabriel García Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude (1967) and Salman Rushdie's The Satanic Verses (1988) as pivotal moments in the development of the problematics of the aesthetic of magic realism. Simply put, they represent three points in a trajectory from Carpentier's modernist attempts to

define and represent these complex realities, through the limit-modernist text of Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude, to Rushdie's postmodern attempt to provide an arena for the age-old struggle between the needs and desires of the individual human psyche and the social necessity of rationalising behaviour into controllable and mutually sustaining patterns.

CHAPTER ONE

Magic realism involves the attempt to attain a more holistic vision of reality through integrating magical views of the world with the rationalist views which have dominated European thought since the Enlightenment in the eighteenth-century. I shall begin by outlining the space magic occupies in Western culture, clarifying what I mean by the term. During the course of this discussion I will identify those aspects of the magical which have proved to be valuable resources for magic realist novelists. I shall examine those aspects of indigenous American sacred traditions which have influenced and which prefigure magic realism. I shall then proceed to a contextual examination of the origins of magic realism in Latin America.

The magical was an important dimension of the world-views of both the indigenous state religions of what came to be called America and the Medieval Catholicism of the invading Spaniards. In a sense, then, Latin America retained a peculiarly magical view of reality both through indigenous and European influences. It is out of the collision between this outlook and the "enlightened" outlook of eighteenth-century France, the "rediscovery" of Latin America by the travelling naturalists and anthropologists, the impact of a colonial capitalism, and the influence of the European modernist avant-garde that magic realism grew.

I: Magic, Religion, Science

Magic in its many forms is as old as humanity and it has played a significant role in its evolution. In the face of the explosion of meaning and uncertainty which must have accompanied human-kind's invention of complex language systems, magic played a vital stabilising and organizing role. The sociologist O'Keefe argues in Stolen Lightning (1982) that:

magic combats the uncertainties and dangers of [the] symbolic universe by giving man control over some of the most potent of its symbols. Man uses this power in his first efforts to get control of his own attentionalities and emotions and hence organize and direct his behaviour and the behaviour of others.

(O'Keefe 1982; 39)

As society becomes more complex, so does its cosmology, and it evolves a system of powerful and increasingly abstract symbols and metaphors. These become "available to individuals to help them organize their 'projects' or 'plans' of action just at the time when society 'needs' individuals" (O'Keefe 1982; 40). It may be argued that this is the province of religion, not magic, and indeed it must be admitted that the two are always bound up with one another. However, a distinction must be drawn between the two for the purposes of my study.

Durkheim defined religion as the worship of society, and argued that magic is a reaction against official religion (Durkheim 1915; 42-47, 355-362). Drawing on the work of writers from the Freudian tradition such as Géza Roheim (Magic and Schizophrenia (1955)), O'Keefe argues that the pursuit of magic generally involves "the

expropriation of religious collective representations for individual or subgroup purposes--to enable the individual ego to resist psychic extinction or the subgroup to resist cognitive collapse" (O'Keefe 1982; 14). As such it can at once be seen to be a very ancient, powerful and potentially vital resource for dissident writers. The importance which magical practices particularly attribute to language, the accent put upon the magical properties of words, phrases, incantations, the symbol and metaphoric systems makes magical traditions an attractive resource for novelists.

According to Tambiah, working at the interface of anthropology and sociology, we can look for the origins of the (Western) idea of magic as a separate realm from those of religion and science in early Judaic religion and in the origins of Greek science, respectively (Tambiah 1990; 6). YHWH, the only and omnipresent deity of ancient Israel, was not limited in his sovereignty by any "primordial" realm (Tambiah 1990; 6). He existed prior to everything and created the universe *ex nihilo*. There is thus no mythology about him, and no "natural bond between God and nature" (Tambiah 1990; 6). There is likewise no natural bond with humanity, who are part of the created universe. To sin is thus purely to disobey God's self-imposed morality, and the consequences of sinning are likewise God-willed:

[t]here is thus no automaticity or mechanical causality about this conception of man's sinful acts and their results. It follows therefore that the Bible places a relentless ban on "magic" (as a form of causal action to manipulate God) under pain of death...

(Tambiah 1990; 6,7)

Idols, on the other hand, are constructed of "wood and stone" (Tambiah 1990; 7) and in bearing (as the Bible accepts) occult powers, have the power to act. In the pagan (as opposed to the early Judaic) cosmologies, "the existence of a primordial realm and primordial stuff anterior to, or parallel with, or even independent of the gods" (Tambiah 1990; 7) is accepted. "The pagan gods", then, "do not transcend the universe but are rooted in it and bound by its laws" (Tambiah 1990; 7). In this cosmology, humanity and the gods have certain shared characteristics, they interrelate, and humans may influence the course of events through the coercive powers of magic. Thus in the origins of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, which has dominated the religious predisposition of the West, we find a clear demarcation between religion and magic, the latter term coming to refer to "false religion".

A text titled On the Sacred Disease (late fifth or early fourth-century B.C.) is the first (surviving) recorded instance we have in which a set of beliefs is declared to be magical. This text, whose subject matter was epilepsy,

rejected this disease... as being the result of divine intervention; in other words, it rejected a certain kind of explanation and action that was labelled "magical" or occult. It proposed as a substitute explanation a naturalistic explanation of disease, which itself was tied to a doctrine of the uniformity of nature and the regularity of causes. (Tambiah 1990; 9,10)

The Greeks never rid themselves of mythical and magical elements in their proto-science, however. It is interesting to note that in excluding the magical as a mode of explanation and action they did not directly "disenchant" their universe. In a similar vein to the

Deists of Enlightened eighteenth-century Europe, they maintained that the divine pervaded everything, and because of this was not useful for the explanation of "specific causalities" (Tambiah 1990; 11). Thus these "philosophers and forerunners of 'science' did not rule out 'religion' as opposed to or incompatible with their knowledge" (Tambiah 1990; 11). Nevertheless, this ultimately led to the "disenchantment" (in Max Weber's sense of the word) of their society.

The increasingly depersonalised and functional nature of Hellenic religion and its co-option by the Roman empire with its state religion resulted in a "resurgence of interest in the magical" in later Roman times (Cavendish 1977; 8). The historian of magic, Richard Cavendish, suggests a parallel between this return to magic and the "modern occult revival" which swept through nineteenth-century Europe (Cavendish 1977; 8), both being fuelled by widespread feelings of alienation and solitude in the face of an impersonal universe presided over by a distant deity.

Historically, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries constitute a "historical watershed" in the "demarcation in Western thought between religion, magic and science" (Tambiah 1990; 11). There were two major factors active in this period which were to shape the course of European history. The first of these was Luther's religious revolution. Max Weber argued that ancient Judaism was extremely antipathetic to magical forms of religion, and that Protestantism was a "throwback to early Christianity, while Medieval Catholicism was a temporary lapse back toward the magic

side" (Collins 1986; 59). The absolute sovereignty and omnipotence of the Protestant God--whose will could be clearly seen in the daily events of the world (divine providence)--precluded the coercive interventions of magical acts. As Keith Thomas observes, "[m]agic postulated forces of nature which the magician learned to control, whereas religion assumed the direction of the world by a conscious agent who could be deflected from this purpose by prayer and supplication" (Tambiah 1990; 19). Thus Protestants distinguished between spells and prayer, "'religious' belief" and "'magical' acts" (Tambiah 1990; 19). Protestant theologians, crucially, denied the *efficacy* of magic (whereas early Judaism had condemned the ~~e~~xercising of occult powers). They declared the desire to practice it evil, and trimmed magical elements of Christian ritual to a minimum. Catholic Spain, as we shall see, however, was hardly affected by the Protestant revolution. It was a distinctly magical form of Christianity (with its relics of saints, sale of indulgences, forms of verbal penitence and so on) which was exported to Latin America by the conquistadores.

It is worth noting that it is in this same period that the concept of "religion" arose to describe a system of beliefs involving the supernatural. This was distinguished from what was conceived of as the collections of recipes and remedies which constitute magic. Late Victorian theorists (the anthropologists E.B. Tylor and Sir James Frazer, for instance) would use this distinction in tracing what they saw as the development of humankind from savagery to civilization. Frazer "built up an

evolutionary scheme with three main stages of thought, each paramount in turn: magical thought he placed as the most primitive, then religious thought, and finally scientific thought" (Middleton 1987; 88).

The second major movement in thought to occur in the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries was the Renaissance. In the light of the work of scholars like Thomas and Yates it has become apparent that although the Renaissance introduced a shift in focus from God to Man, this did not involve a movement away from the magical. Whereas the Medieval Church's ban on magic (or at least what it regarded as "heretical magic") had forced it underground, the intellectual historian Frances Yates argues in her Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition ([1964] 1975) that: "Renaissance magic, which was a reformed and learned magic and always disclaimed any connection with the old, ignorant, evil, or black magic, was often an adjunct of an esteemed Renaissance philosopher" (Yates 1975; 17). Yates relates how "the great forward movements of the Renaissance all derived their vigour, their emotional impulse from looking backwards" (Yates 1975; 1). Many of the great Renaissance philosophers, poets and scientists were inspired by magical and mystical elements in Greek thought--such as the esoteric mathematics of Pythagoras. The influence of Neoplatonism was crucial to Copernicus's (who was astronomer to the Pope) discovery of the heliocentric nature of our universe.

One of these "returns" was to the "golden age of magic", and was based upon a "radical error in dating" (Yates 1975; 1). The

Renaissance magi were inspired by the writings of "Hermes Trismegistus", which were thought to date back to the time of Moses. These writings were thought to be inspired by ancient Egyptian magic, and Bruno, claimed as a pioneer and martyr for science for his defence of Copernicus's heliocentric theory and his execution by the Inquisition in Rome in 1600, (Tambiah 1990; 16) claimed that the "magical Egyptian religion of the world was not only the most ancient but also the only true religion, which both Judaism and Christianity had obscured and corrupted" (Yates 1975; 11).

Hermeticism was to become an important influence on the development of magic realism. It "embraces the ideal of universal concord, of a solidarity between man and the world... Philosophically, the hermetica reject absolute ontological dualism and stress the positive, symbolic value of the universe" (Antoine Faivre 1987; 50). As I shall relate in Chapter Two, the tenets of hermeticism were to influence such magi of the nineteenth-century as the Frenchman Éliphas Lévi (1810-1875, formerly the monk Alphonse Louise Constant). Lévi's concern with the magical in the real and his interest in the deconstruction and resolution of opposites attracted the interest of the "Mage of Surrealism", as the critic Anna Balakian has called André Breton in her critical biography (1971). Latin American writers such as Borges and Alejo Carpentier were, in turn, to be influenced by the Surrealists' interest in the magical, as I will show in Chapter Three.

In 1614, however, Isaac Casaubon exposed the documents attributed to the Egyptian priest named Trismegistus as dating from

post-Christian times, and the "stage was set for the shattering of Renaissance Neoplatonism as a framework not only for a Hermetic-Cabalistic magic but also for a natural theology" (Tambiah 1990; 27-28). Despite this, Hermetic thought proved to be highly influential for Romantic thinkers as well as the investigations of as important a "scientist" as Sir Isaac Newton. In an essay entitled "The Fear of the Occult" (1979) Yates argues that "Newton attached equal, or greater importance to his alchemical studies than to his work in mathematics". This has been obscured, she contends, by the historians of a victoriously scientific age.

In short, the contribution of the Renaissance magus to the modern world was to convince humanity that "it was now dignified and important for man to operate [ie act]", that "it was also religious and not contrary to the will of God that man, the great miracle, should exert his powers" (Yates 1975; 156). The Greeks had not seriously applied their theoretical knowledge to practical operations, and the Middle Ages held a similar attitude in believing that "theology is the crown of philosophy and the true end of man is contemplation; any wish to operate can only be inspired by the devil"; (Yates 1975; 155-156). The Renaissance magus's focus on effective action, his/her pursuit of spells/formulae which achieved concrete effects in the world was influential in encouraging the application of scientific knowledge to practical tasks. Besides the discoveries made in the course of the pursuits of alchemy, astrology, numerology and the like, magic gave these proto-scientists the confidence and desire to act upon the

physical universe. The magician operated with the certainty that s/he could discover the secret laws which governed the universe, and learn to influence and control them.

Thomas argues in his Religion and the Decline of Magic (1971) that the partnership between magic and science (alchemy/chemistry, astrology/astronomy, number symbolism/applied mathematics and so on) had collapsed by the late seventeenth century. In Tambiah's words, his argument is that "[t]he epistemological demand for certainty of demonstration by experiment and dissection was eroding magic" (Tambiah 1990; 21). However, as Thomas himself admits, "the common people of the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries never formulated a distinction between magic and science" (Tambiah 1990; 23). Thomas's assumption that magic was in decline by the late seventeenth-century is based on the opinions of an intellectual elite (in particular scientists), as well as the idea of "magic" offered by Reformation thinkers and accepted later by the theorists of an "enlightened" age (magic as false religion and failed science). This idea of magic is well represented in One Hundred Years of Solitude by José Arcadio Buendía's pursuit of alchemy purely for material gain. Despite this decline in magic, it retained its attractions for "common", and some "great", people alike. At various points in this study I will be referring to the continued influence of Hermeticism on anti-Enlightenment movements, tracing its trajectory through Romanticism into Surrealism and via surrealism to Latin American magic realism.

What is it that has kept humanity's fascination with the magical

alive despite all set-backs and suppressions? Why is it that in the nineteenth-century, over a century after the Enlightenment had irrevocably altered the course of European intellectual history (and indirectly its colonies') toward a materialist, post-metaphysical world-view driven by instrumental reason was there such a resurgence of interest in magic? What underlay the modern West's fascination with "primitive" and "exotic" magical religions? What prompted the West's long fascination with Oriental religion (think of the works of such diverse writers as Nietzsche, Weber, Joseph Conrad, E.M. Forster, Herman Hesse)? This resurgence of the magical will be discussed in Chapter Two of this study, putting it in the context of the development of modern European society. For the moment, though, let me advance some tentative answers to the questions I have posed, answers which will clarify what I mean by the term "magical".

Humanity's fascination with magic would appear to arise out of the number of fundamental human needs and desires magic appears to address. I shall briefly detail the ways in which magic appears to do this. The first is that the cosmology implied by the magical situates humanity in a universe of which it is an integral part. Claude Lévi-Strauss writes that magic involves the "naturalization of human actions--the treatment of certain human actions as if they were an integral part of physical determination" (in Middleton 1987; 95). The magical universe is a purposive one whose meaning and actions may be understood in terms of human motivations (i.e. it creates psychological security).

Secondly, the realities of evil and deception are recognised to be part of and not anathema to the divine and the "true nature of things". These are understood as supernatural influences which can be solicited or combatted. There is a focus on the resolution of opposites as opposed to the rigid repression of unacceptable parts, needs or desires of the self. Thirdly, human beings have the power (and hence the responsibility) to act upon the world in a profound sense, and must suffer the consequences of such actions. Magic offers the individual power in the face of the natural world and an alienating society, regardless of his/her social/political standing. Unlike mysticism, it is concerned chiefly with the events and relationships of this world in the present moment. Fourthly, as Malinowski has argued, "magic ritualises man's optimism when there is a hiatus in man's knowledge...[it] is invoked and practiced to fill in the gap of anxiety and uncertainty when the limits of technological control are reached" (Tambiah 1990; 22). Fifthly, and finally,

even parlour magic reminds us that culture is grounded in realities that cannot be seen at all times. Our way of seeing the world, our distinctively human stance toward reality, opens us to the constant possibility of illusion... Magic demonstrates right before our very eyes that our ingrained ways of acting, perceiving, and understanding can and do occasion our ultimate loss of control over meaning.

(Sullivan 1987; ix-x)

Needless to say, many instances of magical behaviour and beliefs are to be found in contemporary society to this day. In the Western tradition we have Christian Science, Rosicrucianism, Satanism, widespread interest in astrology, and much else.

Magic: The Latin American Context

Of course there are other traditions of magic. In this discussion I have concentrated on a brief overview of the European history of magic because the term (derived from the Persian) has been coloured by European concerns, prejudices and preconceptions. Two dominating influences on Western culture, the Judaeo/Christian religious tradition and Greek rationalism, have side-lined and even proscribed the magical. Yet its appeal has always survived, returning in great waves to compensate for the alienation and solitude created by the rationalisation (and hence desacralisation) of the sacred. O'Keefe notes that the difference between so-called magical societies (past and present) and modern Western society is not that the former exhibit a belief in the magical and Western society does not, but that they admit of this belief and Western society generally does not (see O'Keefe 1982; xv).

Many of these alternative traditions of "magic" (in the sense I am using it) have developed independently, despite interference by or even out of opposition to the cultural expansionism of the West. Vodou (and I use McCarthy Brown's spelling as it calls attention to this religion as something other than the negative stereotypes and misapprehensions attached to the term "voodoo") represents an intriguing mixture of all of these elements. McCarthy Brown describes Vodou as

the new religion that emerged from the social chaos and agony of Haiti's eighteenth-century slave plantations [which] blended several distinct African religions with French colonial Catholicism. Dozens of the resulting

Vodou-Catholic Spirits continue to reign over one or another troublesome area of human endeavour and act as mediators between God (Bondye) and "the living".

(McCarthy Brown 1991; 3-4)

Alejo Carpentier, the Cuban novelist who is the subject of my third chapter, discovered that the motivating force behind Haiti's struggle to Independence from colonial rule was Vodou, and not the influence of Enlightenment ideas on colonial administration and a rebellious slave elite. He was fascinated by the shaman figure and the latter's power to move and to mediate between the "natural" and "supernatural" realms. This power is manifested in the shaman's extraordinary powers of oration which enables him to communicate to his people a sense of identity and of belonging.

Many Latin American magic realists have read and have drawn on (both living and "dead") indigenous American sacred texts and traditions. They have done so in order to resist the cultural genocide effected by a secular system of relations (capitalism) which establishes material exchangeability as the dominant relationship between human beings. The capitalist system attempts to homogenise its target market populations and mould their desires and expectations--which in effect effaces their cultural memories and doubly alienates them from their heritage and from their advertised ideal which is ultimately always "other" and hence unattainable. These novelists, however, have also had to wrestle with elements of indigenous American sacred traditions and those which have emerged since the European invasions which are conservative and have undermined and restricted the efforts of Latin Americans to come to terms with their difficult history.

Indeed, magic played a particularly powerful role in the religions of Mesoamerica. In the cosmologies of this region the gods had created the world and human beings after numerous unsuccessful attempts and at great personal sacrifice (Carrasco 1990; 109). Hence the central importance of the intensely magical ceremony of human sacrifice, in which the still-beating heart of a sacrificial victim was offered to the gods in recognition and repayment for their sacrifices made for humanity. The Aztecs believed that the divine force they called *teyolia* ("divine fire") resided in the human heart. The sacrifice of a warrior and the offering of his heart was believed to replenish the energy of the sun. Thus human sacrifice was a crucial form of world renewal (Carrasco 1990; 53, 69-70).

Among much else, Mesoamerican religions display rich and complex symbolic structures for the interpretation of space and time. In these cosmologies the world is divided into four segments, each quarter being structured as a magical flowering tree with a supernatural bird perched on its crown. These trees were believed to stand at the centre of the universe. At the navel or centre of the universe was a great magical tree which linked the three main levels of existence (underworld, earth, heaven) and their subdivisions. The Mayans believed that supernatural forces and the souls of the dead travelled through the stem of this tree. The various cosmic levels were further connected by "spiral-shaped passages called *malinallis*" (Carrasco 1990; 51) which were "pictured as two pairs of heliacal bands...which moved in constant motion" (Carrasco 1990; 67). Supernatural forces, from above or below, "could...enter

the world through caves, fire, sunlight, animals, stones--any place where there was a spiral connecting humans with the spaces or temporal cycles of the gods" (Carrasco 1990; 52). Both the Aztecs and the Mayans developed mathematically sophisticated and elaborate systems of astrology. The spatial organization of their cities and ceremonial centres were determined by astronomical events.

Mesoamerican religions also held that time exists "in three different planes, each intersecting with one another. The meeting of human time with the time of the gods and the time before the gods filled human life with incredible power, changes and significance" (Carrasco 1990; 54). As Lopez Austin explains:

[t]he sequence of correspondences between one and another time resulted in cycles of different dimensions, making each moment happening in human time a meeting place for a plurality of divine forces, all combining to constitute its particular nature... thus an hour of the day was characterized by being a moment of night or day, by the influence of a sign (one among twenty day names) and a number (one among thirteen) in a cycle of 260 days; by the group of thirteen to which it belonged; by its month (among eighteen) and its position within the month (among twenty); by the year (among fifty-two) which in its turn was marked by the destiny of a sign (among four) and a number (thirteen); and so on, successively, through the sequence of other cycles...

(in Carrasco 1990; 57)

Every fifty-two years the Aztecs observed the New Fire ceremony, which marked the "exhaustion of possible interactions between two different calendar systems" (Carrasco 1990; 55-56).

As I will demonstrate in Chapter Three of this study, many Latin American magic realist novelists read and were influenced by indigenous Latin American texts and used their poetic traditions and devices, their structurings of time and of space to try to

articulate an authentically Latin American vision in their works. For novelists an additional inspirational dimension in religions such as that of the Aztecs was to be found in their sophisticated rhetorical traditions. Nezahualcoyotl (the Fasting Coyote), the *tlatoani* (chief speaker, lord, or king) of Texcoco was one of the most influential proponents of a reactionary trend in Aztec religion which sought communion with the gods through the "creation of true words, or supreme poems, or aesthetic works" (Carrasco 1990; 50) rather than through blood-letting or sacrifices. The Nahuatl people developed a highly formalized mode of speech, an art-form layered with multiple and powerful metaphoric elements. Human speech became a florid and elegant ceremony which, as it has come down to them through written records such as the Popol Vuh and Chilam Balam, prefigures the rather baroque styles of the Latin American magic realist novelists of the twentieth century. It is this baroque and formalised speech which made Moctezuma's true feelings opaque to the Spaniards, and the baroque prose of Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude similarly shrugs off the reductive analyses of reason.

Thus it can be seen that, whether in America or in Europe, magic has provided humanity with special symbolic systems with which to control and direct the ultimate uncontrollability of language and meaning, and the conscious being which is formed by and in relation to them. Rather than subsume the individual into the cosmos or society (as religion may do, according to Durkheim), it presents him/ her with a means of "[enabling] the individual ego to resist psychic extinction" (O'Keefe 1982; 14). Even more than in

Roman times the modern individual is faced with the threat of extinction. S/he runs the risk of erasure by bureaucracies, manipulation by politicians, being destabilised and moulded--even recreated--by the media and advertising of a capitalist system.

Magic may offer a foothold, a respite and a source of initiative in the face of the contradictions of life in the modern nation-state. Even today it can facilitate the rebellion of the individual against the monopoly of identity claimed by any universal religion or concept of nationality. Michael Bell argues in his Gabriel García Márquez (1993) that in One Hundred Years of Solitude magic becomes Márquez's chosen narrative mode because it enables him to create a space outside of the Cartesian dichotomies of fantasy and rationalism, of dream and "reality", of "escape" and engagement. He argues that Márquez aims at teaching the reader a more comprehensive mode of apprehending life, one which will not be an escape into solipsism nor determined (through obedience or rebellion) by the paradigms of rationality (Bell 1993; 47-52).

It is worthwhile stressing that the resources of language are of primary importance to the performance of magic. Thus for the novelist magic may offer a rhetorically and symbolically rich resource which empowers individual human beings to act in the face of enormous odds. Moreover, in Latin America magic offers the novelist an ancient tradition of dissidence rooted in the culture and landscape of a people, and yet engaged in a dynamic dialectic with religion and society.

The Nahuatl believed that the cosmos was created by a "supreme

Dual God, Ometeotl" (Carrasco 1990; 87). They had a special form of language to convey this duality in words, called a "*difrasismo*" (Carrasco 1990; 81). A difrasismo consists of "two words or phrases joined to form a single idea, like 'flower and song', meaning poetry or truth" (Carrasco 1990; 81). Analogously, the words "magic realism" seem to me to represent an attempt to synthesize two apparently disjunct paradigms for structuring human experience into a single comprehensive mode. This phrase both demonstrates the traditionally opposed and mutually exclusive natures of the two paradigms represented by it, and simultaneously represents an attempt to bring them together.

Whether this attempt may be considered a success or a failure remains to be seen. But the effort itself has many avatars, in Europe and elsewhere. When, in 1924, André Breton published his Poisson Soluble in which he aspired to "[resolve] these two apparently so contradictory states, of dream and of reality, into a sort of absolute reality, of *surreality*..." (in Kuhn 1980; 135-136) he was also unwittingly establishing a continuity with magical concerns in European thought which would be taken up by the literary avant-garde of the twentieth century. In Chapter Two I shall trace the continuity from Romanticism and the Occultism of the nineteenth-century through Surrealism to Magic Realism.

II: Historical Context

The magic realism of novelists like Carpentier and Márquez cannot be understood merely as a literary mode or theoretical strategy arrived at independently of the Latin American context. In this connection, I wish to give some indication of the forces which collided in the course of the European invasions of Central and South America. Spain was the primary colonial power shaping those parts of this region which concern me in this study, though I will also briefly discuss the influence of France (French ideas and fashions have been influential and much emulated in Latin America during and subsequent to the reign of the Bourbons (Crow 1992; 342)).

There are two main reasons for this historical contextualisation. Firstly, any discussion of the problem of writing Latin America with its overlappings, syntheses, and often unresolved divisions arising out of the collision of indigenous and European world views requires some description of the circumstances which contributed to the creation of such a climate. Secondly, I wish to discuss aspects of the Latin American heritage and contemporary context which have influenced the genesis of magic realism. These include aspects of Spanish culture and of the sacred and rhetorical traditions of the indigenous peoples of America. I will discuss the chronicles of discovery and conquest in the New World, and, briefly, the Latin American literary-political context out of which magic realism has developed.

In the momentous year 1492 Granada fell to Spain and the Moors were finally driven from the Iberian Peninsula after a long and highly influential occupation. Seeking a westerly route to the Indies, Columbus landed in the Antilles and opened the Americas to European exploration and conquest. A Spaniard, Alexander VI, was elected Pope, and a year later would proclaim in a bull that "all lands discovered west of a line one hundred leagues beyond the Azores belonged to Spain", adding in a further bull that "all islands and mainlands whatsoever found and to be found...in sailing or travelling to the west or south" were also to belong to Spain (in 1494 the Treaty of Tordesillas agreed that the line should be moved to 370 leagues west of the Azores, in deference to Portugal's excellent navy). As the historian John Crow (1992) has observed, this was a time which found Spain peculiarly ripe for the adventure of colonialism.

What was the nature of the theatre from which this adventure was to be enacted ? Perhaps the most important historical phenomenon to note here is the first stirrings of nationalism in Europe. With the revival of classical thought in the Enlightenment era, as well as the discovery of sophisticated ancient living civilizations (such as those of Cipango (Japan) and Cathay (China)) that accompanied European expansion and exploration, Europeans were confronted by the realities of religious pluralism and cultural relativity. This confrontation led to a heightened self-awareness and a need for self-definition.

Aided by the collapse of the universal Church, inspired by the

Reformation and furthered by the coming of print and print-languages (which replaced "imperial latin" as printers sought to expand their markets), a more general awareness emerged of differences in custom, spoken language and religious practice which existed in what had been the Holy Roman Empire. People began to feel the desire to live in more parochial communities, a sentiment shared (and exploited) by discontented local rulers (the princes who supported Luther, for instance). This led to a complex process of local and regional alliances and identifications built upon shared or agreed upon assumptions and interests which eventually came to exercise the authority of natural law.

The historian W.A. Coupe relates that the sixteenth-century also witnessed the "culmination of the universal ideal inherent in the concept of the Holy Roman Empire and the triumph of the supra-national ambitions of the Hapsburgs" (Coupe 1978; 93) with the election of Charles V in 1519. He ruled over a vast and disparate conglomeration of territories split by religious schisms between Catholics and Protestants, the nascent rumbling of nationalist sentiments, and menaced by the invasions of the Turks. The task was impossible, as evidenced by Charles's "premature retirement to the monastery at Yuste at the relatively early age of fifty six" (Coupe 1978; 93) and his division of his empire between Philip and Ferdinand.

Although a Fleming, Charles became increasingly Spanish in outlook, and indeed Coupe describes Spain as the "heart-land of his empire" (Coupe 1978; 97). This was hardly surprising, as things had

turned out rather differently in Spain to the religious schismatism and critical humanism of the rest of Renaissance Europe. For a start, there was no significant internal challenge to the Catholic church. Those two pillars of Medieval European society, the Church and the feudal state, were united in the Iberian Peninsula in the pursuit of a holy war aimed at expelling the Moors from their shores. The warlike times did not permit of dissent, and the Spanish Inquisition rooted it out diligently and cruelly under the efficient administration of Tomás de Torquemada.

Despite these restrictions, the exuberant side of the Spanish character found expression in a patriotic Knight Errantry which flourished in life and in literature interdependently. The elaborate rituals and complex symbolic underpinnings of this tradition contributed to what we call the Spanish Baroque, a rich and florid style in literature which has had an influence on the baroque styles of Latin American magic realists. This chivalric tradition enabled individuals to attain great glory as manifestations of the piety and courage of the Spanish people. Indeed the history of Spain became the stories of these great personages. This coherent, focussed, autocratic state with its steadfast belief in the universality of the Catholic Church and its determination to establish it in the world by force of arms was perfectly poised at the end of the fifteenth-century to embark on the last great crusade, perhaps the greatest 'adventure' of Western civilization; the conquest of the Americas.

There is one further, crucial aspect of Spanish society which I

must mention here, as it had an effect both on the fate of the Enlightenment and on the novel in Latin America. The custom of *mayorazgo* ensured the eldest son's inalienable right to his father's estate. Thus the political hegemony of the aristocrats (destroyed by Ferdinand and Isabella) was replaced by an economic hegemony of landlords. As Crow explains;

the transference of this system to America...meant that... the economy [would have] only two great classes, landlords and day labourers. The Indian obviously would be the labourer. No large middle class, no backbone of the small farmer, no development of industry or industrial workers would for centuries be able to challenge the absolute power of land ownership concentrated in the hands of a few families. (Crow 1992; xvii-xviii)

One of the consequences of this was that when the Enlightenment finally had an impact on Spain through France, attempts to liberalise labour policies and abolish slavery in Latin America were fiercely resisted by this powerful class of landowners. A more "enlightened" colonial policy was flagrantly disregarded on the ground. In Carpentier's The Kingdom of this World the French landowner M. Lenormand de Mézy grumbles bitterly about "Utopian imbeciles in Paris" deciding to liberate slaves in between "faro hands in the Café de la Régence" (Carpentier 1975; 42).

The Incas

The Incas were the most tightly organised indigenous society the Spaniards were to encounter in the New World. They were a clan who settled themselves in a fertile mountain valley in what is now Peru

in about 1100 CE. They established their capital there, naming it Cuzco (meaning navel, or centre), and from here their empire spread in radiating waves of conquest to embrace, at the time of the Spanish invasions, about half a million square miles and somewhere between five and six million people. Their empire was built upon their leader, the Inca, who was believed to be a direct descendant of the Sun/god. He thus wielded immense power and was beyond the reach of all other authority, being regarded as a god on earth.

Subjects of the empire had all of their time and energies absorbed in its maintenance. Everyone had a job to do, and unemployment was unheard of. Everyone was provided for. However, there was little individual freedom. A contributing factor to this levelling process was the enforced conversion of conquered peoples to the state religion of the Incas, the worship of the Sun and the Inca. Intransigent clans would simply be uprooted and resettled hundreds of kilometres away in strange surroundings in more settled parts of the empire. This levelling process and the quashing of initiative it resulted in gradually became part of the Inca mind-set, and thus when Pizarro captured the Inca Atahualpa, his followers were dumbstruck and at a total loss as to how to proceed. As a result a handful of Spaniards were able to bring the whole Inca empire crashing to its knees.

The Inca empire is a perfect example of a society dominated by a religion which in a sense amounts to a worshipping of that society. The contribution of magic as a means of preserving the ego

and the clan in the face of a totalitarian society, and magic as a means to individual initiative was sufficiently suppressed not to be able to save the Incas from the inflexibility which ensured their collapse. Interestingly, as the cultural historian Sabine McCormack notes in her Religion in the Andes: Religion and Imagination in Postcolonial Peru (1991; 3-4), it is more accurate to say that the original sacred traditions of the peoples conquered by the Incas may still be discerned among their descendents today, rather than the remnants of the imperial religion of the Sun. I want to argue, then, that on a local level magical traditions survived the demise of the official religion of the Incas and enabled their practitioners to retain a sense of identity and belonging in the world.

This tension or difference between the local and the universal will prove to be an enduring concern and puzzle for magic realist novelists. In a post-war world where "nationalism [has become] international, to the point that it becomes possible to speak of such things as 'Islamic nationalism' or 'Latin American nationalism' in reference to entire continents or regions" (Brennan 1989; 59), these novelists are attempting to address/represent both specific local communities and traditions as well as the universal issues raised by such communities' relations with the world at large. Thus in Carpentier's The Kingdom of this World the Haitian slave and Voudou devotee Ti Noël becomes a Latin American everyman struggling to come to terms with the political confusions and tyrannies of a nascent "nation".

This movement whereby the local becomes universal is perhaps the point at which the word "magic" in "magic realism" is most loosely used. Does it refer to an exotic quality, the kind of escapist fantasy which has made "magic real" novels so popular in the West? Is it purely escapism which attracts a Western reading public, and if so, does it perhaps answer a real psychological need? Does it refer to a specific tradition of magic, such as that of the Aztecs, or Vodou, or the Guajiran Indians of contemporary Colombia? Does it refer more broadly to a mode of apprehending the world, or even a peculiar essential quality which can be ascribed to an entire continent? These are questions I will address in the remainder of this study.

The Aztecs

The Aztecs were the most powerful clan on the Mexican plateau when Cortes and his companions arrived there in 1519. Perhaps the main difference between the Aztecs and the Incas was that the Aztecs ruled principally through fear and violence. In fact, the Aztec "empire" could more accurately be described as a city-state. The Aztec clan was the dominant one in an alliance of twenty clans who had their base in Tenochtitlan (founded circa 1325 CE on the site of present-day Mexico City).

In part one of this chapter I mentioned Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl, the eleventh-century ruler of the great Toltec kingdom of Tollan in my discussion of Mesoamerican magical and sacred traditions. Born

in the year *ce acatl*, he was forced into exile in the year *ce acatl* (the Aztecs had a cyclical conception of time), fifty two years later. In Toltec and Aztec tradition, he was expected to return triumphantly from exile in the next recurrence of the year *ce acatl*, fifty two years on. As Carrasco has noted, "it is one of the amazing coincidences of history that the Aztec year *ce acatl* fell in the Christian year 1519, the year that Cortes appeared in Mexico" (Carrasco 1990; 59). Hence Moctezuma's apprehension at the arrival of the Spaniards, and his circumspect treatment of them.

A further hindrance to the Aztecs' ability to deal with the Spaniards is rooted in their cyclical notion of time and their highly developed oral traditions. Tzvetan Todorov notes in his The Conquest of America ([1982] 1992) that where writing cannot perform the function of "memory support" speech must, and much of the knowledge of the Aztecs was contained in ritual discourses which come from their past (Todorov 1992; 81). Because they believed that time was cyclical in nature, "prophecy is memory" (Todorov 1992; 85), and nothing could occur which had not been foretold. Hence Moctezuma's inability to respond spontaneously or decisively to the new and unexpected phenomenon of the Spanish conquistadores. Todorov observes that the Indians'

verbal education favors paradigm over syntagm, code over context, conformity-to-order over efficacy-of-the-moment, the past over the present. Now, the Spanish invasion creates a radically new, entirely unprecedented situation, in which the art of improvisation matters more than that of ritual. It is quite remarkable, in this context, to see Cortes not only constantly practicing the art of adaptation and improvisation, but also being aware of it and claiming it as the very principle of his

conduct... 'should it appear in anything I now say or might in future say to Your Majesty that I contradict what I have said in the past, Your Highness may be assured that it is because a new fact elicits a new opinion' (Todorov 1992; 87)

For the Spanish, time was predominantly linear, and the world was moving, changing, developing toward the Day of Judgement in accordance with divine providence. They used the knowledge of the past, as had Columbus, to look to the undiscovered future.

These different conceptions of time were to become central concerns of magic realism. On the one hand indigenous circular conceptions of time were attractive as alternatives to the linearity of the materialist culture of the colonial West, and on the other hand they made the indigenous American cultures incredibly vulnerable to Western expansionism. On the one hand, a circular conception of time could offer a certain security to the individual, could endow the passage of time with a deeper significance, and help him/her to endure their pre-determined or prefigured lot. On the other hand this circular conception of time could create a great solitude in the individual, a sense of entrapment in a predestined cycle of events, and this could result in a resignation and acceptance of one's lot, no matter how miserable or unjust it may be.

In One Hundred Years of Solitude the Buendía's are entrapped in a hundred-year cycle, arguably through their conception of the cyclical nature of time and their lack of historical consciousness. There are two primary narratives involved in this novel, the original manuscript of Melquíades the Gypsy mage, and Márquez's

account thereof. The Buendías remain trapped within Melquíades's script, but the Gabriel Márquez character escapes Macondo before it is destroyed. Ultimately, the steam-train of progress must tear apart the closed cycle (the denial of time and therefore of death) of the history of Macondo.

The Chronicles

The chronicles of the Spanish discovery and conquest of Latin America, of the collision of the cultures mentioned above, play the same originary role for many Latin American writers as did the great chivalric romances for European writers. These chronicles were written by priests and adventurers and some by scarcely literate soldiers who wished to record the extraordinary events and sights in which they were privileged to participate. The discovery of the Americas by Europeans was, after all, to change the face of European history, helping, for instance, to initiate capitalism, turning Europe's gaze outward from the Mediterranean to an ethos of imperialist action, to the single-minded pursuit of material gain.

So extraordinary were the sights which confronted these early explorers, that in describing them in their writings they often turned to the extravagant fancies of the chivalric romances for correlatives. One of Cortes's men writes on first seeing Moctezuma's gorgeous halls that one could only liken them to some of the fantastical descriptions in Amadis of Gaul (an enormously popular chivalric romance in fifteenth-century Spain): "we were amazed and

said that it was like the enchantments they tell of in the legend of Amadis, on account of the great towers and buildings rising from the water, and all built of masonry. And some of the soldiers even asked whether the things that we saw were not a dream" (Bernal Díaz del Castillo 1956; 191). Indeed the European imagination had long situated an arcadia, an Atlantis, mystic isles, an Avalon away to the west. Thus in a sense, as Octavio Paz and others have argued, America was invented before it was discovered. Once discovered, the New World was written in the utopian discourses of the Old World's desire for a new beginning and a return to Eden.

The chronicles were written in the midst of vivid and recent experiences, and many of them recount marvels and miracles which embody the fears and hopes, not to mention lusts of their authors. There are tales of divine interventions in battle and of the sulphurous deeds of heathen deities/devils. Columbus wrote that "[b]y many signal miracles God has shown himself on the voyage" (in Todorov 1992; 10), a self-confirmation of his self-image as a "providential agent with divine election and a prophetic task" (Kadir 1992; 2). Many of the chronicles were written by priests who made manifest their beliefs and motivations in their descriptions of events through the supernatural signs and interventions they described. These were at least partly intended to justify the excesses of the gold-struck conquistadores (who were capable of extreme cruelty and the blackest treachery) as well as the intolerance and destruction of indigenous customs and sacred objects displayed by the priests themselves. As Mario Vargas Llosa

argues, however, we should not discount these chronicles as merely cynical fabrications, but should value them for what they tell us about the motivations, the prejudices and ideals of their authors (Vargas Llosa 1987; 6).

One of the things which scholars have deduced from documents like these and European texts of similar vintage is the conception of the imagination shared by the European conquerors, missionaries and travellers in Latin America in the fifteenth and sixteenth-centuries. The cultural historian Sabine MacCormack writes that they

conceptualised cognition in terms that derived, in the last resort, from Aristotle's discussion of the faculties of the soul, in particular intellect, sense perceptions, and imagination. They thought of the imagination as the faculty that distilled phantasms or imagined concepts from sense perception. These phantasms were then processed by the intellect into reasoned thought. On the one hand, imagination was therefore the necessary mediator between the mind and what sense perception gathered about the world external to the mind. But on the other hand, imagination was regarded as being in constant danger of forming random or illusory phantasms not strictly based on sense perceptions, as happens in dreams. Equally, theologians reasoned, imagination could open itself to demonic illusions. (MacCormack 1991; 7)

Thus the imaginative faculty could provide access to the spiritual realm. The visions and oracular utterances of the indigenous peoples of Latin America were in this view illusions implanted by the devil. Equally, God could reveal his divine will to human kind through such interventions.

Thus there is in this conception of cognition an inescapable interweaving of the sacred and the profane, the magic and the real which is clearly manifested in the chronicles. Thus these early

documents, the first histories of the European presence in what was to become "Latin America" already contain full-blown (con)fusions of the "real" and the "magical". Vargas Llosa writes of the seductive intertwinings of the real and the imagined in these writings, and it would appear that the supernatural or extraordinary events described in these chronicles foreshadow the model of magic realism I describe in the second chapter of this study. They are attributed to powers operating within a religious system, and are not merely the random inventions of fancy. Indeed, their authors would object strongly to Vargas Llosa's description of them as "imagined" (see Vargas Llosa 1987; 7).

III: The Novel in Latin America

The publication of novels in Latin America only dates from 1816. Why? The reason is, simply, that the Inquisition banned imaginative literature from the colonies from the earliest times. The literary historian Doris Sommer relates that

Spain had proscribed the publication, and even the importation, of any fictional material in the colonial dispositions of 1532, 1543, and 1571. Whether for its own Catholic utopian vision of the new world, or for reasons of security, Spain tried to police the Creole imagination. (Sommer 1991; 11)

However, these attempts were a failure, as evidenced by the "repetition of edicts and the surviving records of a lively business in forbidden fiction" (Sommer 1991: 11). Vargas Llosa enviously fantasises about reading a bootlegged edition of Cervantes's Don Quixote (many copies found their way into Latin

America after its first 1605 printing) smuggled into the country in a wine barrel. According to Vargas Llosa,

[r]epressing and censoring the literary genre specifically invented to give the "necessity of lying" a place in the city, the inquisitors achieved the exact opposite of their intentions: a world without novels, yes, but a world into which fiction had spread and contaminated practically everything: history, religion, poetry, science, art, speeches, journalism, and the daily habits of people. (Vargas Llosa 1987; 5)

He claims that "[we] are still victims in Latin America of what we could call 'the revenge of the novel'. We still have great difficulty in our country in differentiating between fiction and reality" (Vargas Llosa 1987; 5). This (con)fusion of fiction and reality has become a distinguishing mode of magic realist fiction. Márquez, for instance, questions conventional "realist" notions of what is real and what is fiction by concretising the metaphors and the repressed fantasies which influence our conscious behaviour. The literary critic Michael Bell gives the example of "Remedios's emotional unavailability and airiness becom[ing] a literal floating from the world" (Bell 1993; 51).

What was the trouble with novels; why were they perceived to constitute such a subversive genre? With the shift in focus from God onto the individual in the Renaissance, and with the individual becoming an increasingly free/independent agent (albeit in a limited sense) with the rise of capitalism and the emergence of the merchant and industrial classes, there arose a genre of writing which focussed--often with a sceptical eye--on day-to-day events in individual lives. Dr. Johnson (1709-1784) defined the novel as a

"small tale, generally of love", as opposed to romance, which he defined as "a military fable of the middle ages: a tale of wild adventures in love and chivalry" (Sommer 1991; 25). As Sommer relates, the novel in the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries was the "domestic genre of surface detail and intricate relationships, whereas romance was the genre of boldly symbolic events" (Sommer 1991; 25).

We thus have a shift from the ritualised genre of the chivalric romances to the novelist's concern with matters of individual conscience, with personal experience, with individual hopes and doubts and fears, with the impact of social institutions and political events on individual lives. Further, the emergence of the printing press and of a reading public in the middle class freed the novelist from the obligations and restraints of patronage. In sixteenth-century Spain, where the chivalric epic had become so elaborate and formalized that it had turned into self-parody, the picaresque novel was born out of de Rojas's classic La Celestina (1499). These novels were texts of disillusionment, celebrating (while pretending to judge) the amoral lives and connivings of thieves and lowlives, which amounted to an expression of the decadence of the Spanish national spirit.

Perhaps the main reason why the publication of novels was proscribed for so long in Latin America, however, was that "[w]ith Rousseau and Voltaire at their head, French writers were perhaps the most powerful single influence in bringing about the end of political despotism in France, Spain, and eventually in the Spanish

dependencies" (Crow 1992; 340). Of course the liberalisation of colonial policy effected by Louis XIV's Enlightenment France did not have much effect on how things were actually run in Latin America until after the Wars of Independence (motivated by Creole dissatisfaction with peninsula rule and sparked by Napoleon's conquest of Spain and the overthrow of the Spanish monarchy in 1808). The banning of the novel was a contributing factor to this state of affairs.

Writing History/Building Nations

The literary historian Doris Sommer calls the novels written by Latin Americans during the period of the establishment and consolidation of nations in the nineteenth-century the "foundational fictions" (in her book Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America 1991). She notes the curious denial of this significant body of literature by the novelists of the Boom, by writers like Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa, Julio Cortázar and others, calling attention to Borges's amused rendition of this paradoxical anti-traditional "tradition" of denial, of the "repetitive circularity and the impossible pride of starting anew" (Sommer 1991; 4) in his story "The Wall and the Books". Sommer argues that the Boom writers are "haunted" by the "erotic rhetoric that organises patriotic novels" (Sommer 1991; 3). In all their twistings to get free of the positivist coupling of national projects with "productive heterosexual desire" they paradoxically "reinscribe" this desire in their writings.

To better understand what it is that the Boom novelists, magic realists among them, were trying to escape, it is necessary to look at the writing (in both the senses of recording and of creating or moulding) of history in Latin America and the special role novel writing came to play in this process. Further--this being of prime importance to grasping the political dimensions of Latin American magic realism--these founding fictions were often written by men who were to become the political leaders of their countries. They often did not distinguish between their political projects and their fictional projections, leading to a confusion of the political realities of their countries with their personal visions of what they should be.

André Bello argued in an essay entitled "Historical Method" (1848) that a "science" of history based on the meticulous collection and correlation of data was inappropriate for a continent where so little of such basic historical data existed. He argued that "[w]hen a country's history doesn't exist, except in incomplete, scattered documents, in vague traditions that must be compiled and judged, the narrative method is obligatory" (Sommer 1991; 8). He advocated personal invention over "scientific" method, allowing history to be created out of personal passions rather than pretensions to objectivity. Hence the value of narrative, to fill in the many gaps in existing historical knowledge as well as to create authentic local expression.

The role of narrative, and of the novel in particular, in the project of nation-building has been much remarked on. The historian

Benedict Anderson calls the modern nation state an "imagined political community" (Anderson 1983; 15). An essential aspect of imagining a community is a sense of "simultaneity", a sense of the diverse multitude of events occurring simultaneously within its borders as constitutive of a united whole. The nation is always imagined to represent a "deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 1983; 16) despite actual inequalities which may exist within it. Anderson suggests the "development of print-as-commodity" facilitated new ideas of simultaneity which made "transverse-time" communities possible (Anderson 1983; 41). The "half fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of production and productive relations (Capitalism), a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity" (Anderson 1983; 46) contributed to nationalism as the dominant community of this type. The literary critic Timothy Brennan argues in his Salman Rushdie and the Third World (1989) that the novel plays an important role in the creation of nations: "[the novel's] manner of presentation allowed people to imagine the special community that was the nation", for the novel form includes a babel of conflicting discourses and parallel narratives in a single delimited text (Brennan 1989; 6).

Once they had gotten rid of the influence of the "foreign" colonial power (achieved everywhere but in Cuba and Costa Rica by mid-century), the creoles were faced with the problem of asserting their own legitimacy as what amounted to a "ruling class" in Latin America. Sommer argues that, lacking genealogical claims, they set

about securing conjugal and generative rights through intermarriage with the indigenous population. Many leading Latin Americans turned to the novel as a means of establishing their identities as Latin Americans within the framework of the nation-state, and romance was to be the cornerstone of this literary nation-building. The Mexican Ignacio Altamirano observed in 1868 that "[n]ovels are undoubtedly the genre the public likes best... they are the artifice through which today's best thinkers are reaching the masses with doctrines and ideas that would otherwise be difficult to impart" (in Sommer 1991; 36).

Indeed, one of the attractions of Latin American fiction for literary study is the openness and clarity of the perceived political role of the novel exhibited there. Sommer reports that in 1847, for instance, "the Argentine future historian, general and president, Bartolomé Mitre, published a manifesto promoting the production of nation-building novels" (Sommer 1991; 9). He believed, Sommer contends, that

[n]ovels would teach the people about their history, about their barely formulated customs, and about ideas and feelings that have been modified by still unsung political and social events. They would be what they already were in Europe and in [James Fenimore] Cooper's America: 'a loyal mirror in which man contemplates himself as he is with all his vices and virtues, and which generally awakens profound meditation and healthy criticisms'.
(Sommer 1991; 9)

It is startling how many nineteenth-century Latin American novelists became presidents of their countries, and these men did not distinguish in their novels between fictional projections and the actual project of building a nation. It is the idea of the

novel as "a loyal mirror" which magic realist novelists like Márquez and Rushdie question, trying to discover to whom the mirror is loyal and trying to reveal and interpret its opacities and exclusions.

Erotic Rhetoric

According to Sommer's thesis, once independence had been achieved the warlike epics and the celebration of uncompromising, violent and self-sufficient men ~~were~~ inappropriate to the ensuing period of consolidation. The heroes were to return home and become husbands. Domestic and social relations were now the writer's focus in the effort to build up the fabric of national life, to create the stable social institutions which are the pre-requisite for civil society. Further, there were heterogeneous populations to reconcile, populations divided by race, class, language and religion. The programmatic novels of nineteenth-century Latin America set out to achieve this through the rhetoric of romance, to reconcile a divided population through presenting the triumphs of "natural" affections over the "artificial" barriers of race and class.

Now the family provided a very powerful allegory for the building of nations. In bourgeois Europe for the first time love and marriage were taken to naturally coincide. Sexual desire was widely believed to be the basis of all human society. As Sommer points out, though, the relation between nation-building and the myth of the family is a symbiotic one--each deriving impetus from

the other. Likewise, "the relationship between novels and new states has a Moebius-like continuity where public and private planes, apparent causes and putative effects, have a way of twisting into one another" (Sommer 1991; 7). In the novels of García Márquez and of Salman Rushdie we shall see this "twisting into one another" of "public and private planes", as they explore nations through the myth of the family, and human society--the family and the individual--through the myths of the nation.

Many of these nineteenth-century Latin American novelists were motivated both by the need to fill in the gaps in Latin American history in order to legitimate their national projects, and also to shape these projects through their fictions by projecting a future ideal. Whereas in the "cynical" novels of the Old World love affairs were often illegitimate and therefore socially destructive, the New World novelists created relationships between young and pure heroes and heroines from different social and/or racial backgrounds. Whereas in European novels of the time it was often other characters who came between and finally frustrated or brought the hero and heroine together, in Latin America the relationship between the lovers was straightforward and the love triangle was completed by the external hindrances of an unjust society which had to be overcome in order for love to triumph. These novelists thus collated the allegorical nature of romance as Walter Scott defined it with its concern for "extrapersonal and social dimensions" with the domestic focus of the novel with its portrayal of the "ordinary train of human events [in] the modern state of society" (cited

Sommer 1991; 25) through the catalyst of "natural" love.

Sommer describes how in these Latin American novels "a variety of novel national ideas are all ostensibly grounded in 'natural' heterosexual love" (Sommer 1991; 6), and goes on to argue that "[r]omantic passion... gave a rhetoric for the hegemonic projects in Gramsci's sense of conquering the antagonist through mutual interest, or 'love', rather than co-ercion" (Sommer 1991; 6). One should not underestimate the success of nation-building through the romantic novels' presentation of transgressive love and the narrative necessity for social change to achieve productive familial relations. Many of these nascent nations achieved in the nineteenth century a measure of common interest between private familial life and public affairs which would have been the envy of western political philosophers.

These continuities between the individual and the general, the family and the nation, a community and a continent are reflected in the allegorical penchant of magic realist novelists such as Carpentier and Márquez. Michael Bell argues, for instance, that the insomnia plague suffered by the inhabitants of Macondo in One Hundred Years of Solitude is a symptom of the destruction of Indian cultures, since it is caught from the Indian servants and "the destruction of someone else's cultural memory usually involves the guilty repression of your own" (Bell 1993; 45).

By the late nineteenth-century the relatively inclusive and flexible society of national consolidation through the ideal of natural romance had more or less congealed into increasingly rigid

patriarchal structures. A later novelist like Márquez thus pillories the erotic rhetoric of the foundational fictions because the relationships (conjugal and political) which were ultimately generated were incestuous ones.

Latin American governments turned to positivist philosophies on development, to the implementation of "scientifically" imagined schemes. This alienated novelists from the political and economic spheres, and they turned toward the modernism of the European avant-garde and Latin American proponents thereof such as Borges, Darío and the early Neruda. Further, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries the return of the threat of neo-imperialism (for instance the shock of the intervention of the USA in Cuba's War of Independence) led to the return of the patriarch, the husband reverting to the hero. Sommer relates that the 1880s found many Latin American nations adhering to a grim positivism and nostalgically regarding the idealism of the early post-Independence era as the product of a naive age.

In the twentieth-century, particularly since the coming of the (foreign-dominated) mass media, the attempt to distinguish the magical from the real has taken on sinister political implications for Latin Americans. The long line of dictators and despots who have wreaked so much terror and misery on their divided and factious populations have literally had the power to "create" the truth, to *make* lies and fantasies the truth, and to conjure away facts, witnesses, even whole families and protesting crowds. In a way, magic realist novelists have undertaken to reverse this

process, not just in terms of rewriting history from the perspective of the oppressed, but through exposing the contingent and motivated nature of what is called the truth and yet trying to tell the truth through their extravagant "magical" works.

In this they are the paradoxical heirs of the traditions of liberal thought brought to Latin America from the "enlightened" France of Louis XIV. While early European writers on Latin America such as Montaigne (in his essays on the "Cannibal Caribs" and the Tupi people of Brazil) were largely demonstrating what a biographer Peter Burke calls the "Germania Syndrome" ("in his Germania, the great Roman historian Tacitus...had described the courage and the simple manly life of the German barbarians as a reproach to his effeminate contemporaries", Burke 1981; 46), there had developed a liberal tradition of politically "committed" writing in the post-Independence era. Writers such as Clorinda Matto de Turner (Birds Without a Nest, 1889), Alcides Arguedas (Raza de Bronce, 1919), Jorge Icaza (The Villagers, 1934) and Ciro Alegría (Broad and Alien is the World, 1941) wrote (if rather patronisingly) about the injustices suffered by the indigenous populations of Latin America, the latter two novelists actually influencing legislation in the favour of these peoples in their native countries, Ecuador and Peru, respectively.

A magic realist novelist like Carpentier found himself in the difficult position of wanting to represent the magical beliefs of Latin Americans within the critical European genre of the novel without condescension or prejudice. He was faced with the diffi-

culty of drawing on sacred and magical traditions indigenous to America as "authentic" and non-European ways of apprehending the world, and having to face the fact that conservative elements within these traditions often contributed directly to the vulnerability of indigenous Americans to the colonisers.

The paradox facing magic realist novelists is that of opposing the positivist outlook of the European Enlightenment and the capitalist excesses it has generated in Latin America (such as the massacre of striking workers of the United Fruit Company alluded to in One Hundred Years of Solitude), and acknowledging the important role played by Enlightenment thought in the emancipation of Latin America from slavery and the tyranny of the colonial Spanish Church/State. The challenge is to offer a mode of interpreting the world which incorporates valuable dimensions found in indigenous traditions but not in the secular positivist paradigms of the West, and those elements of Enlightenment thought which assert the value and dignity of all human life irrespective of colour, class, gender, political affiliation or religious orientation.

In conclusion, then, Latin American magic realist novelists draw upon elements of indigenous American culture such as the rhetorical traditions of the Aztecs and the complex cosmology of the Mayans. They draw upon elements of Spanish literary culture such as the baroque style of the chivalric romances and the poet Góngorra, and on the bawdiness and irreverent tone of the Spanish picaresque novels. They have been shaped by the chronicles of the discovery and conquest of Latin America with their (con)fusions of the

magical and the real, and they are a reaction to the tyranny and confusions which have resulted from similar and related confusions between the imagined and the real in modern Latin American politics. Their magic realism addresses the ways in which reality is (and has been) imagined in Latin America, and suggests more inclusive modes of apprehending life, drawing on both indigenous magical traditions and Western Enlightenment values.

The magical and the real have been inextricably intertwined in Latin America ever since Europeans arrived in the fifteenth century and began to try to assert the primacy of what they chose to call the "real". As I have argued in part one of this chapter, magic has offered magic realist novelists a tradition of resistance, a means to articulating a Latin American vision which can challenge the positivist impositions and erasures of the colonist and the neo-colonist. But above all, it is a dynamic tradition which engages in an ongoing dialectic with the sacred traditions and social and political structures of contemporary Latin America.

Finally, it needs to be noted that the early nineteen-twenties found Latin America gripped by a renewed spirit of nationalism in response to a growing awareness of United States and European domination. In the face of this, writers and intellectuals began to feel that they had not succeeded in articulating a unique Latin American reality. Whereas under Spanish colonial rule society had been dominated by the Church, after Independence this liberal elite had become free to "promote the new liberal ideology which provided the rationale for independence. They could become the high priests

of the modern culture of the Enlightenment, bearers of the values of rationalist humanism" (Williamson 1987; 79).

In this role, intellectuals reacted against the perceived superstition, irrationalism and authoritarianism of the Catholic Church manifested in a long career of the abuse of clerical privileges and powers. Like the missionaries before them, they set about educating people out of the old myths and gods, hoping to create new myths which would "positively articulate their sense of being native-born Americans rather than transplanted Europeans" (Williamson 1987; 79). The new nations were to be forged, then, in an inclusive way which would allow indigenous Americans, Mestizos (the children of parents from different ethnic--usually indigenous American and European--groups), African slaves and Criolles (Europeans born in Latin America) to feel part of a new and somehow inherently Latin American community.

However, by the beginning of the twentieth-century this task remained unfulfilled. The literary historian Edwin Williamson argues that "such new stories as had been invented...lacked the potency of the fables that thrived among the common people" (Williamson 1987; 79-80). The trouble was that the rationalist ethos of the Enlightenment was inherently suspicious of myth and fable. It had developed in opposition to the dogmatism of the Catholic Church, and away from the mental constructions and mythic patternings which the ancients had imposed upon the universe. In Latin America the Enlightenment idea that the means to achieving utopia lay in the rational ordering of society had caught on in the

face of intransigent populations and economic hardships.

Thus, allied with their concern that they had failed in their task of replacing the myths of the Catholic Church, of colonialism and of parochialist indigenism, there was a growing dissatisfaction among Latin American intellectuals with the socialist realist novel with its often overly schematic black-and-white presentations of social injustices. While the literary historian Philip Swanson (Swanson 1990) has argued that some of the great social realist novels were not as simplistic as was then thought, that they in fact revealed (if implicitly) serious difficulties within this mimetic mode, perhaps the principle objection to these novels was the idea that they were too derivative of European models.

Thus many Latin American writers turned to the experimentalism of European modernism for new ways of asserting their Latin American identity. The European modernists were also trying to find new ways of apprehending the world, trying to make it new, to escape the conventions of a positivist Europe with its largely mimetic art. As Herbert Read said of Picasso's art,

we are now concerned, not with a logical development of the art of painting in Europe, not even with a development for which there is any historical parallel, but an abrupt break with all tradition... The aim of five centuries of European effort is openly abandoned.

(in Bradbury 1976; 20)

This desire to make it new can be found in--and was fed by--a developing interest in the supernatural and the new and fast expanding fields of anthropology and psychoanalysis. I now wish to turn to a consideration of these aspects of European modernity the better to understand the influence they exerted on Latin American

magic realist novel writing.

CHAPTER TWO

Magic realism involves the integration and inter-modulation of a magical view of the universe with elements of the Enlightenment view which has dominated European thought since the eighteenth-century. In this chapter I shall formulate what I mean by the Enlightenment, discuss its manifestations and counter-traditions in European culture, and examine its relations with Latin America. Out of a number of influential movements (French Existentialism and Futurism, for instance) and individual (Kafka, Virginia Woolf, Hemingway, Breton) influences on magic realist authors I have chosen to examine the role of Surrealism in magic realism's genesis. I find a study of this movement (with its clear historical links with magic realism which I will detail below) to be particularly illuminating of Latin American magic realism. This is so both in the concerns and intentions which the two movements share, and in the differences of emphasis and departures it occasioned in the Latin American novelists under scrutiny in this study.

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

Max Weber advanced the thesis in his The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1903) that Reformation thought and more specifically Calvinist Puritanism played an important role in the development of the rational capitalism which characterises modern Western society. For the first time, work could be viewed as a positive activity, indeed in the light of Reformation teaching one

was "called" to one's vocation as only priests and monks had been "called" before. Whereas "usury" had been regarded as a sin and the idea of selling something for profit had been believed to be immoral,

it became the part of positive piety to make the most of one's God-given talents in daily business. Acquisitiveness became a recognised virtue--not immediately for one's private enjoyment, but for the greater glory of God. From here it was only a step to the identification of riches with spiritual excellence, and of rich men with saintly ones. (Heilbroner 1969; 32)

Protestant businessmen were honest, hard-working and ploughed their profits back into their businesses, which flourished. "Capitalism grew, but puritanism began to fade away. The Protestant ethic, precisely because of its effects of transforming the world, eventually undermined itself" (Collins 1986; 51) and gave way to an increasingly materialist and secular world-view. Weber argued that the rationalisation of what had originally been a spiritual impulse contributed to what he called the "entzauberung" (or disenchantment) of modern European society.

What was the nature of this transformed world? Karl Marx, perhaps its most famous analyst, also located this change in the rise of the bourgeoisie. In The Communist Manifesto he and Engels argued that

the Bourgeoisie has torn apart the many feudal ties that bound men to their "natural superiors," and left no other bond between man and man than naked interest, than callous cash payment. It has drowned the heavenly ecstasies of pious fanaticism, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egoistical calculation...The bourgeoisie has... in place of exploitation veiled by religious and political illusions...put open, shameless, direct, naked exploitation. (in Berman 1988; 106)

The laws of God and Nature and of the social conventions founded upon them had been usurped by a system of economic relations: capitalism. Capitalism required, Marx argued, the "constant revolutionising of production", and effected an "uninterrupted disturbance of all social relations" (in Berman 1988; 95). Thus in modern bourgeoisie society

[a]ll fixed, fast-frozen relationships, with their train of venerable ideas and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become obsolete before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and men at last are forced to face with sober senses the real conditions of their lives and their relations with their fellow men.

(in Berman 1988; 95)

Protestantism had, unwittingly, also contributed in another way to the disenchantment of the universe. As Tambiah has observed, Calvin's predetermined universe presented a cosmology in which God had created the universe according to certain laws and in obedience to which it functioned. This

new conception of regular laws of nature, which could be understood by man in terms of his empirical experience, was integrally and vitally in accord with the scientific spirit of the time. A further entailment of the conception of a Sovereign God who has promulgated laws of nature, which man could investigate and affirm empirically through his own senses and ingenuity, was to allow that Sovereign God to recede further and further from view in everyday practice of positive science. (This was the slope that finally led to the "secularization of the world").

(Tambiah 1990; 17)

What was the "scientific spirit of the time"? In short (and any final and comprehensive formulation is out of the question as the issue remains so contentious), it involves the rejection of the possibility of "privileged or a priori *substantive* truth" (Gellner 92;

80), and the embracing (and absolutising) of a *procedure* for interpreting experience, accumulating knowledge, and making judgements. Generalized to a world-view, this means nothing is exempt from the inquiries of this procedure, which is in essence reductive and examines and generalizes the relationships between the components of the object/s of its study. According to Gellner, "[c]ultures are package-deal worlds" whereas "scientific inquiry...requires atomization of evidence" (Gellner 92; 81). He argues that "this re-examination of all associations destabilizes all cognitive *anciens regimes*. Moreover, the laws to which this world is subject are symmetrical. This levels out the world, and thereby 'disenchants' it, in the famous Weberian expression" (Gellner 92; 81).

By now numerous formulations, both scholarly and otherwise, of the consequences of this disenchantment have been advanced. At the most general level, though, as the British writer and critic John Berger recently argued in an essay entitled "Keeping a Rendez-vous" (1990), "the spiritual was marginalised, its prohibitions and pleas were ruled out of court by the authority given to economic laws, laws given the authority (as they still are) of natural laws" (Berger 1990; 230). Official religion turned its back on individuals and courted power as it had in Roman times (it was no longer a necessary adjunct to political power). Even so, as Berger goes on to say, "the human imagination has great difficulty in living strictly within the confines of a materialist practice or philosophy" (Berger 1990; 231). People created "enclaves of the beyond, of what did not fit into materialist explanations" (Berger 1990;

231), and a series of movements arose which preserved "for [their] adepts fragments of the spiritual which had been banished" (Berger 1990; 231).

To illustrate this dialectic between Enlightenment rationalism and its counter-traditions which I will refer to broadly as Romanticism (after Tarnas 1991), a brief recounting of its origins in the thought of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is apposite. Weber developed his methodology for a social science in sympathy with and in reaction against the idealist philosophies which had blossomed in Germany in the period 1780-1820 (Collins 1986; 33). These philosophies may be seen as responses to the dilemmas raised by Enlightenment thought as formulated, pivotally, by Kant (Tarnas 1991; 340). I shall sketch Kant's formulation of these dilemmas and responses advanced by him and one other philosophical strain of idealism: the "aesthetic idealism" of thinkers like Goethe and Schiller (Collins 1986; 37). But what is "Idealism" ?

Kant had concluded that reason can only give us knowledge of the phenomenal world, and that this knowledge, attained through the medium of experience, is already coloured by the way in which the human mind is structured to comprehend sense data. Thus philosophy began to turn away from metaphysics and from "pure science" to the study of the workings of the human mind. This confirmed Copernicus' insight that the truths we can know are all already interpretations, and suggested a seemingly irreparable schism between human knowledge and the actual nature of the universe.

Despite this schism, however, Kant knew that "within the bounds

of sensory experience, as in natural science, mathematical truth was patently successful" (Tarnas 1991; 342). He argued that "the mind-world correspondence was indeed vindicated in natural science... in the critical sense that the "world" science explicated was a world already ordered by the mind's own cognitive apparatus" (Tarnas 1991; 343). In Kant's view "[t]he world addressed by science corresponds to principles in the mind because the only world available to the mind is already organised in accordance with the mind's own processes" (Tarnas 1991; 343). Therefore, "[t]he necessity and certainty of scientific knowledge derive from the mind, and are embedded in the mind's perception and understanding of the world. They do not derive from nature independent of the mind, which in fact can never be known in itself" (Tarnas 1991; 343).

Thus our knowledge was limited to that which we could perceive, to empirical data. This meant, for Enlightenment thinkers, that we could not know anything about God through the exercise of reason, and theology was just so much casuism. It was not until the advent of psychoanalysis that emotional experiences, dreams and fantasies were admitted to the realms of empirical data by Enlightenment rationalism.

The stage in the intellectual development of the West broadly referred to as the Enlightenment represents, in short, that period (approximately later seventeenth century to 1800) in which intellectuals turned away from the sacred universe and magical aspects of the science of the Renaissance in the belief that all human

institutions, beliefs and perceptions are the creations of the human intellect. Thus through rational inquiry and the co-ordinated implementation of the discoveries of numerous untrammelled studies, Enlightenment thinkers like Voltaire (1694-1778), Locke (1632-1704) and Jefferson (1743-1826) believed that an utopian society could be designed. As the sociologist and economist David Harvey (1990) relates:

[t]he scientific domination of nature promised freedom from scarcity, want, and the arbitrariness of natural calamity. The development of rational forms of social organisation and rational modes of thought promised liberation from the irrationalities of myth, religion, superstition, release from the arbitrary use of power as well as from the dark side of our own human natures.

(Harvey 1990; 12)

A realist aesthetics developed in relation to these trends in European thought which held that the work of art could and should reflect the world "as it is" (or at least as it is for humanity). "Realistic fiction", writes Ronald Sukenick, "presupposed chronological time as the medium of a plotted narrative, an irreducible individual psyche as the subject of its characterization, and, above all, the ultimate concrete reality of things as the object and rationale of its description" (in Chamberlain 1986; 5). The artist should offer an analytical account of his/her environment, a critique which would contribute to the creation of an Enlightened society. Integral to this aesthetic is the tendency to universalise one's own perspective on what the world is and where it should be going.

It was Kant who crystallised the contradiction at the heart of the Enlightenment project to create a science of society which

could steer humanity toward Utopia. He faced the difficult task of reconciling the Newtonian conception of a fixed determined universe with the Enlightenment belief in moral codes which pre-supposed freedom of the individual (Megill 1985; 10). In other words, how was the free-thinking, unique subject to be reconciled with the fixed objects of the Newtonian universe?

In his Critique of Judgement (1790), Kant may (and was taken to) suggest the aesthetic as a realm of Being separate from those of the determined object and of the free subject--a realm which perhaps transcends the Cartesian dichotomy and which might play a mediatory role between subject and object, self and the universe, mind and body. While he actually explicitly denied the existence of a separate aesthetic realm of existence, Kant does suggest that aesthetic judgements and creations give us access to something not wholly graspable through experience or concepts. He does also suggest a certain universality underlying aesthetic judgements (Megill 1985; 12). While, as we have seen above, his thought made a major contribution to the sidelining of the sacred in the modern world-view, Kant never suggested that there was not a fundamental sacred dimension to existence. Indeed, he argued that phenomena such as moral behaviour could not be explained without recourse to an acceptance of the existence of God.

Schiller took these ideas further, arguing that "modern" industrial society had alienated Man because it had split people's rational, formal drives (unity, continuity) from their sensual (protean, revolutionary) drives. According to Schiller, it

was only through the exertion of a third drive, that of "play", that these two contradictory drives could be reconciled. This play drive, which has as its object "living form" ("all the aesthetic qualities of phenomena, and, in a word, what in the widest sense of the word we call beauty" (Schiller, in Megill 1985; 14)), is manifest in the realm of Art, a dimension in which a constraint upon the sensual and the formal drives is possible which is simultaneously sensual and formal. Hence a resolution of conflicts (the challenges to moral law posed by the sensual drive, and the curbing of the feelings by the formal drive) was possible through an exuberance, a superabundance rather than through spiritual or physical impotence.

Only in the contemplation of beauty was the spiritual wo/man brought back into the sensual world, and the sensual wo/man to cogitation and the consideration of form. For Schiller as for Kant, however, the aesthetic and the non-aesthetic remained importantly separate, and art is concerned with semblance and not reality or truth. Notice the difference in emphasis here (from a strict realism which must deny and attempt to repress the distorting influence of personal motivations and unconscious urges on its accounts of reality), the focus being on a holistic attempt to achieve an equilibrium of conflicting impulses within the self.

For Schelling and Goethe, however, the essence of the world can be captured, by intuition rather than reason. Aesthetic Idealism was to have "a powerful influence on nineteenth-century thinkers, particularly those who might be called the 'romantics'" (Collins

1986; 37). Many of the Romantics believed that the artist was a gifted figure who enjoyed a special access to Being which transcended the limits of sensual perception and conceptual knowledge. Art, they believed, contains the hope of union (often conceived as a reunion, a return) with the universe, and of self-knowledge. Art, indeed, supersedes the intuitive genius of the artist in this vision, and can embody truths the artist him/her-self could not express conceptually.

This entails an implicit faith in the potential of language to tap the well-springs of Being, to escape or remain untainted by the conceptual limitations and interpretative conventions of the artist/child/primitive/naïf--a faith manifested in the Symbolists' interest in children's and "primitive" (Gauguin) art, and in the Surrealists' belief that automatic writing (Breton) or paranoiac painting (Dali) could bring us snapshots of the unconscious untrammelled by the restraints of consciousness. It also presupposes a substratum of Being, a reality which may be apprehended through aesthetic means (Baudelaire and Rilke's Nature as a forest of symbols, Jung's collective unconscious, or even Kant's "supersensible substratum of humanity"--in Megill 1985; 13) by the intuitive genius of the artist. Thus in the Romantics' conception of the artist we find a combination of Renaissance individualism and the social function of the prophet, mage or shaman. It is a role aspired to by Alejo Carpentier in The Kingdom of this World, and one which becomes increasingly problematical for later novelists such as Márquez and Rushdie. Indeed, it is precisely a

growing and radical mistrust of language which differentiates their projects from those of modernists like Carpentier and the Romantics before them.

The new Enlightenment emphasis on the study of the human mind was concerned only with "objectively" verifiable data. In contrast its antithesis (despite their many shared concerns, such as the study of human consciousness), Romanticism, displayed a fascination with the irrational, the abnormal, the unacceptable and the fantastical. Where the scientific world-view characteristically adopted a reductionist approach to understanding the world, trying to break it down into its constituent parts and isolate the basic laws and processes which determine its nature, the Romantics aspired to a vision of the universe as an organic whole of which they longed to be an integrated part. They were concerned with excess and cosmic harmonies. The Romantics desired to identify with, to be reunited with the universe, while Enlightenment thinkers believed that humanity was forever entombed within its cognitive paradigms and that knowledge of the true nature of the universe was therefore impossible.

Whereas Enlightenment thinkers were focused on the progress of society toward utopia, the Romantics were by and large more concerned with the existential dilemmas of the individual. Indeed much of the power of what I am broadly calling Romantic thought here resides in its concern with what John Berger has called the "unprecedented solitude" (Berger 1992; 236) of the individual life in the face of the dominating idea that s/he is merely a stage on

the path to material success or even some future utopia populated by a race of *Uebermenschen*.

Modernism

If the Romantics had sought, in Wordsworth's famous expression, to intuit the underlying "power which rolls through all things", and if nineteenth-century realists had gone about representing a "God's-eye view" of reality, the moderns were faced with an increasingly multi-faceted and fragmentary reality the apprehension of which seemed to require the adoption of many perspectives and complex formal innovations. Historically, the ascendance of positivism over eschatological means of acquiring knowledge did not cease to exert great pressure on the Romantic notions of intuitive knowledge and individual genius. The democratisation effected by the infiltration of empirical method and research into the realms of the human psyche through the social sciences undermined the latter dimension of what Foucault called that "empirico-transcendent doublet, classical Man" (in Schrift 1990; 29).

At the close of the nineteenth-century, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, for one, observed that there appeared to be two separate and conflicting definitions of the modern, "the analysis of life and the flight from life... One practices anatomy on the inner life of one's mind, or one dreams. Reflections or fantasy, mirror image or dream image" (in Bradbury 1976; 71). Indeed, literature had been under siege by science at least since the eighteenth century.

Hofmannsthal allows literature the options of either taking a scientific, reductionist and analytical approach to life--or leaving it alone altogether (and taking to the somehow "unreal" realms of dream). The great strides made by science and technology threw a long shadow on the endeavours of the literary imagination. Science appeared to be able to explain the universe far better than the artistic imagination or religion could. This was tangible magic, formulae not incantations, which could seemingly reveal and enslave the physical universe. Worst of all, perhaps, it seemed that in novels such as Zola's Le Roman Experimental (1880) scientific methods were encroaching on that last bastion of artistic legitimacy and moral authority; the quasi-religious transcendental powers of the artist.

The social sciences were born in the nineteenth-century, annexing for empirical enquiry the interpretation of subject and society, even of madness and dream (those old licences for art's critical role as court-jester). The French Decadents (1857-1890s), for instance, were not alone in expressing a horrifying sense of being impinged upon by the modern world, of being rendered object: so many Prufrocks pinned wriggling to a wall. Further, the interpretations of human existence advanced by thinkers like Darwin, Marx and Freud seemed to void human existence of all its nobility and purpose and expose all our strivings, our bravery, nobility, piety--in a word all the qualities which for the humanists had made humankind great and separate from and superior to the physical universe--as sophisticated manifestations of the same

basic libidinal drives which motivated all life as we know it.

"God is dead" proclaimed that great prophet of modernism, Friedrich Nietzsche, and trembled at the consequences for humanity. For did this not also herald the death of "Man"? Where in Foucauldian terms language had served to represent the universe centred on God, in Enlightenment thought the concept of "Man" had become the foundation for knowledge (for Kant as for Descartes). Man, in this conception, could focus the slippery resources of language to express meaning. However, Darwinism first challenged any stable notion of "Man", and psychoanalysis later gave the lie to the conception of a fully self-aware objective knowing self. Was the lesson in Nietzsche's Madman's proclamation not that what was "dead" was the idea of a transcendent organizing principle? The dynamic and destructive forces Marx had identified as intrinsic to capitalism seemed to confirm the nihilism of Nietzsche's vision of the modern world. While these ideas only obtained wide currency in the postmodern world, a concept which was beginning to be identified in the nineteen-sixties (at the time Márquez wrote One Hundred Years of Solitude) and which had been widely accepted in the Western world by the nineteen-eighties (when Rushdie wrote his The Satanic Verses), they probably underpin the fierce positivism which dominated late nineteenth and persisted into twentieth-century European thought up until the Second World War.

Marshall Berman, noting that the modern bourgeoisie "claim to be the "Party of Order" in modern politics and culture" (Berman; 1988; 99), remarks:

[t]heir secret--a secret they have managed to keep even from themselves--is that, behind their facades, they are the most violently destructive ruling class in history. All the anarchic, measureless, explosive drives that a later generation will baptize by the name of "nihilism"...are located by Marx in the seemingly banal everyday working of the market economy.

(Berman 1988; 100)

It was the market-oriented positivism of the bourgeoisie which directed the last phase of European colonialism, and this accounts for the violence of many anti-colonial thinkers' and writers' repudiation of "European rationalism".

For some writers, however, the strides made by science were a challenge to the artistic imagination. Surveying the products of modern technology, Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918) remarked that "[these] wonders impose on us the duty of not letting imagination and poetic subtleties lag behind those of the artisans who improve the machine" (in Balakian 1959; 57). Rather than retreat into the dream from poverty, class discrimination, political violence and the alienating nature of industrial labour, thinkers such as André Breton sought to synthesize these traditional antitheses, to grasp the reciprocal and intertwined relations of dream and reality, subject and object, conscious and unconscious minds. The Surrealists in particular were consumed with an optimism that the exploration of the insights of psychoanalysis and their integration into the social and political spheres would lead us to a healthy society, in the same way that many of them believed that Marxism would in the sphere of economics.

I have chosen to examine Carpentier in Chapter Three of this study partly in order to offer one salient example of how both

Enlightenment European influences and their European antitheses fed into--and were adapted by--Latin American literary traditions during the period of European modernism. Surrealism is of particular interest in that (besides being particularly resonant for Spanish artists such as Miro and Dali) it sought to resolve the antinomies between the Enlightenment rationalist and Romantic impulses, rebelling both against a reductionist and narrow realism and a fantastical and solipsistic escapism in the arts. Chapter Three will offer a detailed account of the attractions and very real impact of Surrealism and its particular concerns (such as psychoanalysis and anthropology) had on Latin American writers. Carpentier is, indeed, the most important example in this respect because his The Kingdom of this World is the first avowedly magic realist novel to appear in Latin America, and because his works and his theorisation of "lo real maravilloso" have had an important impact (see Chamberlain 1986; 7) on the Latin American literary scene.

In psychoanalysis the empirical methods of Enlightenment rationalism were brought to bear on the insights into human nature of the great Romantic poets and other artists and philosophers from outside the Enlightenment tradition (1). While Freud (1856-1939) regarded myth, magic and religion as merely anthropological phenomena, and did not believe that there were any metaphysical implications to his discoveries, his work revealed (amongst much else) the importance of "magical" acts and beliefs to the human psyche. This emphasis on the workings of the mind rather than the

magical filters through to Surrealism and ultimately distinguishes it from magic realism.

To Freud's theory that the unconscious contained all the anarchic, primitive and unacceptable drives repressed by the internalised collective superego which we call civilization, Carl Jung (1875-1961), both Freud and Janet's protégé, added his "compensation theory of the unconscious" (Jung 1964; 15). He theorised that "Whenever life proceeds one-sidedly in any given direction, the self-regulation of the organism produces in the unconscious an accumulation of all those factors which play too small a part in the individual's conscious existence" (Jung 1964; 15). In an overly anthropomorphized society in which we suppress the "animal in us" we run the risk of that "suppressed animal burst[ing] forth in its most savage form... which in the process of destroying itself leads to international suicide" (Jung 1964; 22). Hence the importance of

religious ideas [which] are an artificial aid that benefits the unconscious by endowing its compensatory function--which, if disregarded, would remain ineffective--with a higher value for consciousness. Faith, superstition, or any strongly feeling-toned idea gives the unconscious content a value which ordinarily it does not possess but which in time might attain, though in a very unpleasant form. (Jung 1964; 19)

Freud's diagnoses of the mentally disturbed constantly referred back to childhood and adolescent experiences as the underlying sources of their present difficulties, experiences often communicated to consciousness in the form of dreams. This looking at the child in order to understand the adult was not an entirely new approach to the study of humanity, and was the paradigm for the

anthropology of the time (2). Freud writes of the "so-called savage and semi-savage races [that] their psychic life assumes a peculiar interest for us, for we can recognise in their psychic life a well-preserved, early stage in our own development" (Freud 1938; 15). He was intrigued by the idea that "the sharp distinction between thinking and doing as we draw it does not exist either with savages or with neurotics" (Freud 1938; 245), and cautions that "[w]e must beware of introducing the contempt for what is merely thought or wished which characterises our sober world where there are only material values, into the world of primitive man and the neurotic, which is full of inner riches only" (Freud 1938; 244).

Anthropology seemed to confirm much of what Freud was postulating about human psychology. According to the anthropologist E.B. Tylor (1832–1917, regarded as the "father of modern psychology" cf. Tambiah 1990; 43),

[t]he earliest religion was based upon a series of intellectual (and partly linguistic) confusions between the self and the other. In dreams people saw themselves roaming about in strange places, where they met other people, some of them long dead. This experience led to the belief that every man had a double existence, corporeal and spiritual. (Kuper 1988; 80)

Adam Kuper, in his The Invention of Primitive Society (1988), links the intellectual phenomenon described in his title to the "late Victorian surge of imperialism" and the "rise and fall of nationalism" (Kuper 1988; 9). He points out that the "idea of primitive society fed the common belief that societies were based either on blood or on soil, and that these principles of descent and territoriality may be equated with race and citizenship, the

contrasting components of every imperialism and every nationalism" (Kuper 1988; 9). However, he goes on to argue that perhaps the major attraction of this conception was that it appeared to situate all societies, however different or unequal, on a "single hierarchy, through which all would eventually progress" (Kuper 1988; 9)--an idea which inspired socialists and colonials alike.

The classical evolutionists (Tylor, Wundt et al) divided cultures into progressive stages of development ranging from varying degrees of savagery through barbary to civilization. It is via such theorisations that we arrive at the notion of the psychic unity of humankind in which all peoples are subsumed into a hierarchy of civilization within which western civilization occupies the supreme (and perhaps unenviable) role of adult (3).

European Influences in Latin America

The European natural and social sciences were to have a significant impact in Latin America. The distinguished critic of Latin American literature Roberto González Echevarría (1990) argues that in Latin America "the mediating force of science was such that the most significant narratives did not even pretend to be novels, but various kinds of scientific reportage" (Echevarría 1990; 11). The new chroniclers of the "second European discovery of America" in the nineteenth century (Echevarría 1990; 11) were the naturalists who believed that science had "qualified" them to "search for the truth" (Echevarría 1990; 12).

This notion of the "travelling savant, distanced from the reality he interprets and classifies according to the intervening tenets of scientific inquiry" (Echevarría 1990; 12) is replaced in the "so-called novela de tierra or telluric novels" (Echevarría 1990; 13) of the nineteen-twenties by a "different kind of mediation: anthropology. Now the promise of knowledge is to be found in a scientific discourse whose object is not nature but essentially language and myth. The truth-bearing document the novel imitates is the anthropological or ethnographic report" (Echevarría 1990; 12).

Echevarría observes that anthropology somewhat paradoxically involves both a "master[ing] of non-historical cultures through knowledge, by making them the objects of its study" (Echevarría 1990; 13), and a "kind of annihilation of the self" (Echevarría 1990; 12) which requires an intimate knowledge of western culture in order to distance oneself from it and "disappear into the discourse of method. Distancing, a process whose counterpart can only be found in modern literature, involves a kind of self-effacement" (Echevarría 1990; 13). This "self-effacement" on the part of the author is a central characteristic of magic real writing. Carpentier and Márquez, for instance, characteristically efface themselves from their narrations of "magical" events, which are usually described matter-of-factly by a credulous narrator/focalizer (as I shall detail in the chapters devoted to each of these writers respectively).

However, this self-effacement does not attempt the detached

critical distance aspired to by scientific discourse and the authors of "realist" novels. In anthropological works the subject matter had been judged by the form in which it was presented, the rational breakdown and systematic organization of mythical thought employed by a phenomenological approach. Magic Realist novelists, on the other hand, tried to introduce new voices into the novel form. This meant that formal innovation was necessary, and they turned for inspiration both to indigenous magical traditions (such as astrology) for means of spatial and temporal organisation, and to the experimentalism of the (often anti-Enlightenment) European literary avant-garde. While Márquez's use of the fictional community of Macondo is analogous to the anthropologist's case study of a community in order to understand a larger ethnic group or era in history, the magical realist mode he chooses to present this "history" is very different to the "scientific reportage" of (for instance) the socialist realist novels of the twenties in Latin America.

This magical realist mode is also, as I shall argue below, a very political act. It questions the truth-claims of rationalist discourse, the sort of "objectivity" presumed by, for instance, the no-nonsense factual visually-illustrated news-clips of a network like CNN. As I have argued in Chapter One this questioning is particularly necessary in Latin America, in response both to the abuse of the media by politicians and a tradition of novel writing concerned to obliterate differences in order to forge nations (nations imagined by a literary elite of European descent). It took

Latin American intellectuals a long time to overcome the bias of European anthropology which held that "societies were based either on blood or on soil" (Kuper 1988; 9), and to recognise the possibility of identity in heterogeneity.

Echevarría argues that "[a]nthropology is the mediating element in the modern Latin American narrative because of the place this discipline occupies in the articulation of founding myths by Latin American states" (Echevarría 1990; 13). Indeed myth (defined as sacred narratives concerned primarily with the question of origins) has played an integral part in the creation of the dominant political organisation of modern times, the nation state, defined by the historian Benedict Anderson as "an imagined political community" (Anderson 1983; 15).

Of course, before and throughout the Enlightenment era mythological thought had been at work in the western world, and nowhere more so than in the phenomenon of nationalism. As I have argued in Chapter One, the Latin American novel had been embroiled in creating the founding myths of nations from its inception. However, by the twentieth century many novelists began to feel that these "imagined communities" had been too narrowly imagined. Even if the European Romantics had long understood the power and relevance of myth, it was only in the early twentieth century that the concept was clearly perceived to be capable of exerting great influence on society independently of a sacred tradition (4).

Surrealism (1920-1966)

As mentioned in Chapter One, European counter-traditions to the Enlightenment of the modernist period were to have a significant influence on the project of Latin American novelists to imagine and articulate their continent. French culture was particularly influential for these writers--ranging from members of the Modernista movement such as Rubén Darío, to Alejo Carpentier (who died in Paris), to writers of the "Boom" such as García Márquez (a personal friend of Francois Mitterrand), Octavio Paz and Julio Cortázar, who also lived out his final years in France. Many Latin American writers aspired to travel to Paris, and while he was in the French capitol the Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier wrote articles for Cuban magazines reporting on the activities of the French artistic avant-garde.

From the twenties, when many Latin American novelists were feeling alienated from the official culture of their nations and dissatisfied with the realist aesthetic as a means of representing Latin American reality, they looked to the experimentalism of the European avant-garde for a new conception of their art. It was in this time that Surrealism arose as a powerful literary counter-tradition in France. For the Latin Americans it was both French and yet also a rebellion against the established world of "Eurocentric", colonialist letters. Surrealism introduced Latin American novelists like Carpentier to psychoanalysis and the anthropological pursuits of the day. It stimulated their interest in magical ways of seeing the world. It attracted them in its opposition to the rational

bureaucratic nature of modern bourgeois society. In Carpentier's case it both attracted him and alienated him in its anti-ethnocentrism and anti-nationalism.

In 1935 Herbert Read gave us a useful definition of the Surrealism (or "Super-realism" as he would prefer to call it) of André Breton and his Parisian associates in a volume including essays by himself and by Breton entitled simply Surrealism. In it he argued that Surrealism was the culmination of the romantic tradition in that the struggle for human freedom and creativity he associated with Romanticism had in the hands of the Surrealists acquired structure, the order and method and conscious co-ordinated political aims the romantic tradition had always lacked (5). He heralded its victory over "classicism" (the antithesis of romanticism and in terms of our discussion comparable to the "realism" of Enlightened modernity), which he identified as "the intellectual counterpart of political tyranny" (Read [1935] 1971; 23). In very Jungian terms he associated it with the "repression of instincts" and argued that such repression "is apt to breed a worse disease than their free expression" (Read 1971; 33). Indeed, he claimed that "not merely the neuroses of individuals result from such repression, but there is more and more reason to believe that the mass hysteria manifested, for example, in such a nation as Germany, is the collective aspect of general repressions" (Read 1971; 33).

He announced in his introduction to Surrealism that

[i]n dialectical terms we claim that there is a continual state of opposition and interaction between the world of objective fact--the sensational and active world of social and economic existence--and the world of subjec-

tive fantasy. This opposition creates a state of disquietude, a lack of spiritual equilibrium, which it is the business of the artist to resolve. He resolves the contradiction by creating a synthesis, a work of art which combines elements from both these worlds, eliminates others, but which for the moment gives a qualitatively new experience. (Read 1971; 40)

This "spiritual equilibrium" was to be attained through the exercising of a kind of "logic" based upon "the only basic elements on which any useful structure can be built--the basic elements of natural science and psychology" (Read 1971; 37-38). This conviction is symptomatic of late nineteenth-century thinking in that the growing interest in the paranormal, the occult and the mystical (the Society for Psychical Research was founded in the USA in 1882) found expression in "scientific" investigations of these "debatable phenomena".

Surrealism, as formulated in Read's definition, represents a point of influence and of departure for Latin American magic realism. Surrealism called attention to the importance of the realm of "subjective fantasy". Breton was caught in a cleft stick however, in that while he believed that this realm is vital to the comprehension of human behaviour and experience, the attempt to comprehend it in any systematic way would seem to require its subjection to rational analysis. Hence his emphasis on the processes of creation and his comparative lack of interest in the works so produced. Hence the "for the moment" of Read's definition.

Where the Surrealists relied on the protean and idiosyncratic nature of subjective fantasy in order to perceive the marvellous in the real, Latin Americans such as Carpentier felt that they could

rely on a "genuine" tradition of magic--perhaps even a magical essence underpinning their everyday reality--which provided a far more stable and "genuine" basis for a more inclusive vision of reality. It is worth noting that this "more stable basis" was limiting, however, in that it was conceived as specifically Latin American--in a way which would not have been acceptable to the Surrealists.

Although the Surrealists, Breton in particular, were effusive in their praise for Freud, they felt that it was their aim and duty to go beyond his limited application of the insights of psychoanalysis. They wished to transcend the distinction Freud only too clearly drew between "objective" reality and the dream reality (6). According to Breton, Freud "without knowing it found... in the dream the principle of the conciliation of opposites" (Balakian 1959; 101). The Surrealists were not content to observe and analyze the "effect of conscious experience on the dream; [they] wanted to go one step further and show the effect of the dream state on consciousness" (Balakian 1959; 101). Breton took his authorization/encouragement from Freud himself (who didn't, incidentally, know quite what to make of Surrealism): "Poets are in the knowledge of the soul our masters, for they drink at sources not yet made accessible to science. Why has the poet not expressed himself more precisely on the nature of dream?" (in Balakian 1959; 101).

Guided into an investigation of the occult by the pioneering psychiatrist Pierre Janet (1859-1947), Breton was to be especially influenced by the writings of Éliphas Lévi (1810-1875), a hermeti-

cist (and extremely unreliable although influential historian of magic). Lévi banished mysticism (which he believed rests on faith in the supernatural) from magic which for him involved a concern with knowledge (not eternal mysteries), with the discovery of the marvellous within the natural world.

Breton came to believe that the "change of personal life and consequently the transformation of the social structure were dependent on the reshapings of the human mind" (Balakian 1971; 44). Integral to this task were the faith of a saint and the rigorous self-scrutiny of a psychologist. For Breton psychic reality, the realm of the magical, is a part--the better part--of material reality, and a "rich involvement in this world can resituate the notion of the 'sacred' within the scope of human experience" (Balakian 1971; 104).

Magic realism takes its cue from Surrealism both in its commitment to broaden humanity's conceptual horizons to include the magical and in its determination to achieve real social and political change through this initiation of the individual into a holistic mode of seeing. Although Carpentier later turned against Surrealism (for reasons I shall detail in Chapter Three), he was profoundly influenced by the movement. This influence was crucial to the development of his brand of magic realism, for it gave him a "greater sense of the role of faith in the magical, in the noncausal, the supernatural, as a factor in artistic creation" (Shaw 1985; 17).

Magic Realism

The concept of magic realism itself is a potentially useful although much abused concept (which is perhaps why many dictionaries and glossaries avoid it altogether--despite its usage in a literary context since the nineteen-forties and despite the emergence of a major magic realist novelist in English in Salman Rushdie). It needs to be better defined and delimited both in terms of content and of form. I shall begin by offering a few more general formulations of what magic realism is, and work toward the formulation I am using in this study.

In his Macmillan Guide to Modern World Literature (1985) Martin Seymour-Smith mentions magic realism only twice, both times in connection with German novelists. He relates that the term is "often associated with Herman Hesse", and defines a magic real work as one in which "a fantastic situation is realistically treated" (Seymour-Smith 1985; 603). In his discussion of Hesse's novel Demian he describes

everything that takes place [as] real enough, and yet the overall effect is 'magical'; hence the term 'magic realism'. The quest for personal values is seen as essentially a magical one. As Hesse picks up each influence--Nietzsche, Christianity, Jung--he transcends it in favour of his own semi-mystical synthesis: for him the solution must always be in individual terms, and must therefore be unique.

(Seymour-Smith 1985; 616)

However, Hesse would seem to me to be better described in terms of a resurgence of the German romantic idealism of Hegel and company--

but in the form of a rather ludic postmodern syncretism--in the face of a remorselessly desacralized materialist modernity. His vision is, in Seymour-Smith's words, "semi-mystical" in that it is a highly individualistic synthesis. In Éliphas Lévi's terms the mystical is concerned with the unattainable and supernatural and it has traditionally been associated with a state of solitude and otherworldliness, whereas the magical is concerned with discovering the magical in the real and as such is inherently bound up with people and their relationships with one another and with the world.

A similar and more recent formulation of the term places or subsumes it into the contemporary catch-all we call postmodernism, ignoring the genealogy of the term completely. In the first chapter (entitled "Magicking the Real: Paradoxes of Postmodern Writing") of a collection of essays edited by Larry McCafferey entitled Postmodern Fiction: A Bio-Bibliographical Guide (1987), Lori Chamberlain argues that

[a]lthough there is no clear consensus among critics about the precise boundaries of magic realism, it refers broadly to that fiction propelled by the tension between realistic elements and fabulous, magical, or fantastic elements. The work of such writers as William Kennedy, Tim O'Brien, Stanley Elkin, Toni Morrison, Max Apple, Thomas Pynchon, Robert Coover, Harry Mathews, Donald Barthelme, and many others integrates both an attention to the real and the power of the imagination to construct that reality. (McCafferey 1987; 7)

This is an apt point to introduce a vital distinction which somewhat narrows the scope of Chamberlain's rather loose definition. Magic realism does not encompass all non-realistic elements, including the mystical, the fabulous and the fantastic. The

literary critic A.B. Chanady observes that "some scholars, such as Ángel Flores, simply equate magical realism with the fantastic" (Chanady 1985; viii), and writes Magical Realism and the Fantastic (1985) in order to distinguish the two. In Chanady's view, while both

the fantastic and magic realism are characterized by the presence of coherently developed codes of the natural and the supernatural, and are therefore structurally similar, the manner in which these two codes interact in the text distinguishes the two modes from each other. Whereas the antinomy appears to be resolved in magical realism, the contradictions between different conceptions of reality are placed in the foreground by the author of a fantastic text. (Chanady 1985; 69)

This is an important point, and I wish to extend it by distinguishing two tendencies within magic realism itself.

One can discern two major trends emergent from the Romantic response to Kant's Enlightenment dilemma (discussed above). The first involves the idea that the artist has a privileged access to Being which transcends the limits of sensual perception and of conceptual knowledge, and which presupposes a substratum of Being, an underlying unifying reality which may be apprehended through aesthetic means. The second tendency involves an aestheticism in which the world itself comes to be regarded as text/s, in which "reality" is inaccessible or is nothing more than the language which is thought to express/reveal it, and in which causality becomes merely a fiction of the mind.

In the tendency within magic realism which I associate with the first response mentioned above--and which I would associate with novelists like Carpentier, Márquez and Rushdie--the author is

critically involved with coherent existent traditions of the magical. In the work of a Carpentier (at least in his The Kingdom of this World) there is the belief that the artist can attain access to a magical dimension of reality. However, as we shall see, in the works of later writers like Márquez and Rushdie the engagement with the magical aspects of the realities they wish to represent is a more problematical and critical one, although the seeds of this are already there in Carpentier's novel.

In the tendency in magic realism I associate with the second response mentioned above--and which I link to the fictions of Borges--magic is not presumed to give the artist access to the "real" or "objective" world. There is no allegiance to a coherent tradition of magic except in the most abstract sense that the narrative act may function in a way analogous to the sympathetic magic of primal religions. In this view all religious and philosophical texts are fantasy literature, the products of human imaginations. Thus this fiction examines, reveals, plays with and pokes fun at the constructions of the human mind and the construction of the human mind. It could be described as political fiction only in the indirect sense that it reveals the relative and motivated nature of the strategies of human rhetoric.

In essence, the distinction between these two tendencies within magic realism lies in the matter of "faith". Using McCormack's description of the conception of the imagination held by the conquering Spaniards in the sixteenth-century as an analogy, one could say that fantastical thoughts (and those of the aestheticist

tendency in magic realism) are the creations of wayward and whimsical minds, whereas magical thoughts are the product of the interventions of supernatural powers. The fantasist suggests ways of constructing reality, and may question existent versions thereof, while the magic realist seeks to reveal a deeper reality and perhaps to teach people how to perceive it. I wish to henceforth leave the aestheticist tendency out of my consideration of magic realism as it is one which does not attempt to embrace "two conflicting but autonomously coherent perspectives" (Chanady 1985; 21) on reality. Instead, it presents the myriad perspectives of humanity on reality in confrontation with the incomprehensible chaos of its actuality.

Magic realism was taken up in Latin America "in the Forties [as a] means of expressing the authentic American mentality and developing an autonomous literature" (Chanady 1985; 17). David Lodge, in his The Art of Fiction (1992), defines magic realism as follows:

[m]agic realism--when marvellous and impossible events occur in what otherwise purports to be a realistic narrative--is an effect especially associated with contemporary Latin-American fiction (for example the work of the Colombian novelist, Gabriel García Márquez) but it is also encountered in novelists from other continents, such as those of Günter Grass, Salman Rushdie and Milan Kundera. All these writers have lived through great historical convulsions and wrenching personal upheavals, which they feel cannot be adequately represented in a discourse of undisturbed realism.
(Lodge 1992; 114)

Carpentier's preface to his The Kingdom of this World (1949) is one of the earliest formulations (or mission statements) of magic realism in Latin America. In this preface he outlined his convic-

tion that there was something unique about American reality, and that in America one could experience the magical in everyday life. He had been deeply impressed by the shaping, nurturing and integrating powers of the Vodou religion on a visit to Haiti in 1943, and wanted to claim those powers for an exclusively Latin American "reality". He believed that to write this reality one had to have faith, to believe in the magical--for only those who believe in miracles can be healed by one.

On the other hand, the critic Ángel Flores wrote an exploratory essay entitled "Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction" (1955) in which he cites Kafka, with his "difficult art of mingling his drab reality with the phantasmal world of his nightmares" (Hispania; 189), as an important influence. For Flores,

[t]he novelty...consisted in the amalgamation of realism and fantasy. Each of these, separately and by devious ways, made its appearance in Latin American realism, since the Colonial Period but especially during the 1880s; the magical, writ large from the earliest--in the letters of Columbus, in the chronicles, in the sagas of Cabeza de Vaca--entered the literary mainstream during Modernism.

(Hispania 1955; 189)

Flores also mentions the signal influence of Edgar Allan Poe and his French Decadent admirers, but interestingly distinguishes his conception of magic realism from the heavy dependence of such productions on "atmosphere, mood, and sentiment" (Hispania 1955; 189). In the same article he describes the Latin American magic realists as masters of "cold and cerebral and often erudite storytelling" (Hispania 1955; 189), taking the year 1935 (when Borges's collection Historia Universal de la Infamia was published)

as the "point of departure of this new phase of Latin American literature" (Hispania 1955; 189). Flores insists that these writers address themselves to the "sophisticated" and "do not cater to a popular taste" (Hispania 1955; 191).

While I agree that the techniques employed by magic realist novelists are often sophisticated, I do not think that these writers have exclusively addressed themselves to a sophisticated literary elite (although it should be remembered that Flores was writing in 1955 and that he considered the heyday of Latin American magic realism to have been the decade from nineteen—forty to nineteen-fifty. Further, he clearly bases his definitions around Borges's writing). The great and lasting popularity of Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude is the best evidence that magic realism need not be the preserve of the sophisticated, and indeed may contain elements and address issues which appeal to a broad spectrum of people. In the light of what I have argued above, I would classify what Flores means by magic realism as something closer to what I have called the aestheticist tendency within magic realism than to what concerns me in this study. However, his observations on the genealogy of magic realism in Latin America and the emergence of the magical into the "literary mainstream during Modernism" are perceptive and relevant to magic realism in general.

Ray Vezcisoni writes in his Magical Realism and the Literary World of Miguel Ángel Asturias (1965) that magic realism is an "expression of the New World Reality which at once combines the traditional elements of the European supercivilization, and the

irrational elements of a primitive America" (Vezcisoni 1965; 17). This formulation reflects a problem inherent in the term "magic realism" itself. The concept of magic has in modern Western culture come to refer to a system of entertainment involving the skilled deception of a gullible audience (which is one of the reasons I began this study with an examination of the importance of magic in western culture). The use of the word "magical" to describe a world-view implies distance from it and incredulity towards it. As Echevarría has noted, this can make magic realism a suspect medium for the "authentic" expression of Latin American Indian culture, for instance (see Chanady 1985; 23).

For Chanady, the fact that the magic realist author uses "learned expressions and vocabulary" and "is familiar with logical reasoning and empirical knowledge" implicitly suggests that "the perspective presented by the text in an explicit manner is not accepted according to the implicit world-view of the educated implied author" (Chanady 1985; 22). While acknowledging Chanady's concern (and it is a concern of every magic realist novelist), I wish to argue that the use of complex and learned language and familiarity with logical reasoning are not necessarily outside the bounds of the magical. There exists, for instance, a large body of highly structured and sophisticated indigenous American literature which is not always acknowledged, especially by those who like to talk generally about a "primitive America" (see above). That which has been lost of this rich and sophisticated cultural inheritance is lost because of a sustained and merciless programme of destruc-

tion carried out by the Spaniards, a form of cultural genocide which extended beyond artefacts and records into the minds and holy places of the American Indians.

Novelists like Carpentier have attempted to recover aspects of this cultural inheritance and develop it as a counter-aesthetic to enlightened rationalism. Thus The Kingdom of this World is structured in accordance with indigenous American astrology, and Carpentier strives to re-order the existing linear empirical history of Haiti through the use of these magical conceptions of space and time. According to Chanady, "[w]hile the implied author is educated according to our conventional norms of reason and logic, and can therefore recognize the supernatural as contrary to the laws of nature, he tries to accept the world view of a culture *in order to describe it* [my italics]" (Chanady 1985; 25). To predict his failure is indeed a self-fulfilling prophecy, if one accepts that his aim is to "describe". However, as I will argue in Chapter Three, Carpentier is struggling to *participate* in this world-view, to realize an authentically American vision of reality. This certainly does not imply the objective distance Chanady attributes to his project, an attitude more apt for a Eurocentric anthropologist like Claude Levi-Strauss or the very historians and diarists Carpentier is revising in his The Kingdom of this World.

To approach the formulation I am using in this study I wish to refer to some remarks Márquez has made about his writing. He has often cited his "grandmother's stories" as the inspiration for the "mythical approach to reality" (Márquez/Mendoza; 59) he employs in

One Hundred Years of Solitude. He says in this interview that

[t]he myths, legends and beliefs of the people in her town were, in a very natural way, all part of her everyday life. With her in mind I suddenly realised that I wasn't inventing anything at all but simply capturing and recounting a world of omens, premonitions, cures and superstitions that is authentically ours, truly Latin American. (Márquez/Mendoza; 59)

He goes on to say that "I was able to write One Hundred Years of Solitude simply by looking at reality, our reality, without the limitations which rationalists and Stalinists through the ages have tried to impose on it to make it easier for them to understand" (Márquez/Mendoza; 59-60). Magic realism thus attempts the conflation (and the mutual challenges this implies) of the magical with Enlightenment views of reality. In what was evidently a great liberation for Márquez he put aside the censoring effects of the rational (which he clearly identifies with an oversimplification of the real and consequent political oppression), and overcame his inhibition that he was "inventing" the magical in a kind of cultural vacuum.

While, as I have argued in my thesis up to this point, magic realism cannot be understood outside of the contexts in response to which it was developed, it is necessary to delimit what I am calling magic realism in such a way that it is clearly recognisable as a literary mode. However, it is not necessary to call a novelist a magic realist if s/he utilizes this mode of writing in a novel, and I would only apply the label to an author if s/he characteristically employs magic realism as a means of investigating or attempting to resolve the relationship between the

antinomious traditions of Enlightened rationalism and magical traditions. My chosen authors are all magic realists in the novels I have analyzed, but do not always write novels which are characteristically magic realist. What I have chosen to pursue in this study is what I consider to be an important strand in magic realism which shows continuities with magical, hermetical and romantic influences--and which is manifested in progressive stages in the three novels I examine.

On a textual level magic realism (in general) can be recognised by a number of interrelated characteristics. These are: (1) normal/conventionally perceived objects and events are presented in unusual ways which draw our attention to them and encourage us to reassess our customary interpretations of them; (2) events which are regarded as improbable or impossible according to conventional rational interpretations of reality are presented in a matter-of-fact manner, and are very often described in naturalistic detail; (3) these events are narrated by a focalizer who does not question their reality or plausibility, and the author does not intrude with explicit judgements on the world-view of this focalizer.

In an age of relativism in literature and scholarship in general magic realism engages with the issue of faith. The sheer scope, vibrancy and humanity of Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude--and the resultant and lasting popularity it has enjoyed --have made nonsense of the claims of European literary critics and theorists that the novel is "dead". It may be dead for those who feel so incapacitated by their self-reflexivity that they cannot write, or

those who believe that any meta-narrative is both impossible and politically incorrect. Certainly for Latin American magic realists, as for authors in analogous situations such as Salman Rushdie, such meta-narratives undoubtedly exist (the versions of contemporary events presented by state-controlled news agencies and the image of human desire projected by international advertising agencies, for instance). Their exclusions, obfuscations, rationalisations and oversimplifications cause untold human misery and these novelists set out to combat them.

Latin America has suffered a long history of ethnic, political and religious intolerance stretching back well into pre-colonial times. Pre and post-colonial indigenous literary sources and oral traditions together with the Spanish and other European chronicles of the discovery and conquest of the Americas testify to this. The literary accounts of explorations and campaigns in the New World sent back to the Old played an important role in shaping the attitudes of rulers and of the general public towards the Americas and their inhabitants.

In the post-Independence era Latin American novelists were faced with undoing over three centuries of misrepresentation. More pressingly, they were faced with the task of building nations out of these divided populations. In the nineteenth-century, however, novelists addressed their efforts predominantly to an elite literate class of readers. Where the Indians, Mestizos, Negro slaves and Mulattoes were mentioned, they were often patronised and viewed through the conceptual filter provided by Rousseau and other

proponents of the Noble Savage and Natural Man (usually conceived of as a child). Even into the early twentieth-century, novelists who now desired to introduce the voices of these silenced ethnic groups into their fictions were at a loss to find a form which could achieve this without judging them as had the "objective" accounts of anthropologists and travelling naturalists in the past.

Faced with the renewed threat of neo-colonialism and alienated by governments which had adopted overly rationalist and materialistically oriented plans for developing their countries, many authors turned to the experimentalism of the European avant-garde for ways of getting around what they perceived as the overly Eurocentric form of the socialist realist novel. They sought a form which recognized the magical dimensions--those indigenous to Latin America, those which were brought by the Spaniards since the fifteenth century, and those which resulted from their subsequent interminglings--which permeate the daily existence of most Latin Americans.

Magic realism offers the possibility of recognising the plurality of discourses in the world, without ignoring the political hierarchies which exist among them. Crucially, in their efforts to resolve the antinomy between Enlightenment rationalism and magical points of view, magic realists have reserved the right to judge both of these traditions. They do not lapse into the moral paralysis of a position which holds that values are culture-specific--leaving no transcendent standard by which to judge them (7).

This belief that all human life deserves equal respect and consideration before the law is part of our Enlightenment heritage. Because of the abuses of power, the rationalisations of human suffering in the interest of material gain and the many other afflictions suffered at the hands of the colonial Western powers, this heritage has (necessarily) come under sustained attack by "Third World" writers. What this has sometimes meant, however (and I view this as a weakness in magic realism), is that conservative elements in the magical are not taken sufficiently seriously. Magical traditions are certainly attacked and challenged, as I have argued above, but on a formal level writing in a magical mode runs the risk of being identified with moral virtuousness in itself, excusing it thus from the responsibilities demanded of realist writings. An analogous confusion is evident in postmodern thought in which self-reflexivity and obscurity are sometimes confused with open-mindedness and egalitarianism, and clarity and precision with fascism.

In sum, I believe magic realism is a literary phenomenon of considerable importance. Historically and politically, it is important as it represents an attempt to address and overcome the exclusions and silences of the colonial past, and in Latin America it is arguably the first fictional form to successfully give voice to the magical world-views of the peoples of that continent. Culturally it is important as it strives to resolve and examine the mutual antagonisms and mistrust between two prominent ways of seeing the world (as well as to reveal their merits and, perhaps,

their interconnectedness as well). Further, it articulates Latin American ways of seeing the world, especially in its adoption of the ways of structuring reality employed by indigenous Latin American sacred traditions. It represents not simply an attempt to present the Indians' side of things (and thus to contain and possess them through knowledge) but an attempt to speak with a Latin American voice (with equal weighting given to both parts of this historico-geographical label).

Over the next three chapters of my study I intend to examine three moments in this project of magical realists to critique and synthesize the magical traditions of interpreting reality held by the peoples they aspire to represent, and an Enlightenment rationalism which has shaped and made its indelible imprint on the world they inhabit. I will focus my exposition around three themes: The author's conception of or relationship to the magical and to realism (whether it be one of scepticism or faith); the attempt to expand modes of perception, both those of realism and of the magical; the question of whether magic realism amounts to a reactionary counter-aesthetic to Enlightenment rationalism, a capture of the magical for Enlightenment ends, or a genuine attempt at synthesis and the articulation of something new?

These questions will be directed at three texts written by three important magic realists, each representing an important stage in the development of the aesthetic: the modernist magic realism of Carpentier's The Kingdom of this World, Márquez's limit-modernist/proto-post-modernist novel One Hundred Years of Solitude, and the

postmodern magic realism of Salman Rushdie's The Satanic Verses.

CHAPTER THREE

Alejo Carpentier was one of the novelists caught up in the Latin American enthusiasm for the pursuit of ethnology. The neo-indigenism of Asturias and Arguedas was manifested in his native Cuba in the form of the Afro-Cuban movement, in which he was an enthusiastic participant. He wrote that Afro-Cubanism offered the "possibility of expressing criollism with a new notion of its values" and that it represented a "renewed national awareness" (Shaw 1985; 5). It also represented a primitivism which purportedly rejected European civilization. Oswald Spengler's The Decline of the West had been published in Spanish in 1923, and with its exaltation of the new American cultures over the "tired" civilization of Europe, attained great popularity in Latin America.

A number of prominent Latin American novelists (1) turned to the "authentic" and popular indigenous cultures of their native countries for inspiration. Carpentier developed a strong interest in the religious ceremonies, the beliefs, the secrets and magic of Naniguismo (2) and of Vodou--which culminated in his first novel Ecué-Yamba-O (Lord, Praised be Thou, 1933). In countries where nearly everyone suffered from a sense of displacement (this is especially true of the Caribbean), the priests, shamans and popular storytellers of these cults seemed to have the power to unite people in a sense of belonging and wholeness.

Ecué-Yamba-O is an indigenist celebration of Vodou and its rejection of white values and domination. It tells a story

of black working class characters expressed in an odd mix of Cuban slang, archaic Spanish, and avant-garde literary techniques. The episodes recounted in the novel are shuffled up chronologically in an almost picaresque fashion in a perceived rejection of allegedly western linear notions of causality. However, inevitably, Carpentier could not fully identify with the magical rites and beliefs of his black protagonists (he was of mixed French and Russian descent, and steeped in western culture) and he--tellingly--often describes these in bestial terms (3). Furthermore, he felt uneasy that in some ways his novel was merely a reactionary product with its avant-garde rebellion against the conventions of the realist novel and its primitivist rebellion against European civilization.

Due to the difficult situation in his native Cuba (he had written the first draft of Ecué-Yamba-O while in jail for signing a petition against the dictator Machado, and was facing the possibility of rearrest), Carpentier escaped the country on the papers of the Surrealist poet Robert Desnos in 1928. From 1928 to 1939 he lived in Paris, closely following and participating in the exploits of the European artistic avant-garde (he reported on developments for the Cuban journals Carteles and Social).

Carpentier's stay in Paris had two important consequences for his development as a novelist. The first involved the culture shock he experienced on arriving in Paris and finding that he was indeed very Latin American, despite his European ancestry and learning. He was later to claim that "I devoted myself for long years to reading everything I could about America, from the letters of Christopher

Columbus through the Inca Garcilaso to the eighteenth-century authors. For the space of eight years I don't think I did anything except read [Latin] American texts" (Shaw 1985; 15). The second and crucial influence (the literary historian Donald Shaw regards it as a "turning point in [Carpentier's] literary development" (Shaw 1985; 17)), was his coming into contact with the Surrealists.

Carpentier had known that he wanted to "escape the criollista manner" (Shaw 1985; 16), but was not sure how to go about it. He was later to write that "Surrealism meant a great deal to me. It taught me to see 'textures', aspects of [Latin] American life I had not noticed" (in Shaw 1985; 17). The Surrealists provided him with a new way of looking at reality and a "greater sense of the role of faith in the magical, in the noncausal, the supernatural, as a factor in artistic creation" (Shaw 1985; 17). As Surrealism seemed to move away from this faith in the marvellous, so Carpentier moved away from Surrealism (I will argue that this perceived shift had more to do with the influence of Spengler's ideas on Carpentier than necessarily on developments within the Surrealist movement). But let us take a close look at what would have attracted Carpentier to Surrealism.

In his exposition of the aims and motivations of Surrealist art discussed above, Read had virtually spelled out the Indigenists' project. His division of art into what he defined as the rival tendencies of romanticism and classicism is analogous to the Afro-Cubans embracing of vital primal cultures as opposed to the perceived repressiveness and decay of European civilization. Where

Read maintains that "classicism is the intellectual counterpart of political tyranny", the Indigenist novelist could claim that the realist novel form and the ideology inherent in it represent a colonisation of the intellect which s/he must escape. As I have mentioned previously, America had been imagined even before she (4) was discovered by European civilization, and, once discovered, was described in the discourses of European desire and inscribed with its technologies, laws and lusts. Even after Independence, the new nations were largely imagined by a literate creolle elite who set about forming them through the very European (albeit modified) form of the realist novel.

Read had seen classicism as a means of maintaining the status quo in the interests of the few. As we have seen, while indigenist novels did speak out for Indians, this was--mostly--the product of Enlightenment ideals and these novelists often wrote patronisingly *about* the "Indians" rather than trying to understand these peoples and give them a voice (see Brotherston 1987; 60-77). On the other hand, the outright rejection of classicism/the European realist novel could simply lead to a "romantic" form of exoticism which equally denied these people a voice in that it was engaging in a dialectic with a European aesthetic. To a Latin American novelist like Carpentier who liked to think of himself as occupying the uncomfortable interstice between the hegemony of the European realist novel form and its binary exoticist opposite (as manifested in his first novel), the idea that Surrealism offered a way out of the classicism versus romanticism debate would have appeared an

extremely attractive one. The hermetic idea of the coexistence of opposites would have held up the hope of a resolution for the aesthetic and personal identity-crisis which Carpentier suffered as a result of his European descent and education on the one hand, and his upbringing in and deep identification with Cuba on the other.

Read's association of classicism with a dangerous "repression of instincts" would also find resonance with Carpentier's Afro-Cuban sentiments. Like other Latin Americans in Europe at the time he was becoming disillusioned with the rationalist ethos displayed by some strands of modernist Europe. Breton had declared that "Latin civilization had had its hour, and as far as I am concerned it is time for a complete refusal to save it" (Balakian 1971; 76). The Surrealists' politically-engaged diagnoses and their opposition to these tendencies in European society made them attractive to someone like Carpentier who had opposed the quasi-totalitarian oppression in his native Cuba and had struggled with the strait-jacket of realist aesthetics. Indeed, Breton was opposing the socialist realism of Stalinist Russia at the very time that writers like Carpentier were battling against what they regarded as its relentless "disenchantment" of Latin American realities.

As I have mentioned in Chapter One, the nation-building novelists of nineteenth-century Latin America adhered to an ideal of "natural love" which they hoped would triumph over the "artificial" constraints of race and class. Writers of the "boom" were likewise haunted by the erotic rhetoric of this period. Was it not some transcendent force for complementariness and union which

Indigenists like Carpentier hoped to find in their stylistic innovations and their ethnological delvings?

So much for diagnosis--what was to be done? Let us recall Read's prescription:

there is a continual state of opposition between the world of objective fact--the sensational and active world of social and economic existence--and the world of subjective fantasy. This opposition creates a state of disquietude, a lack of spiritual equilibrium, which it is the business of the artist to resolve. He resolves the contradiction by creating a synthesis, a work of art which combines elements from both these worlds, eliminates others, but which for the moment gives a qualitatively new experience. (Read 1971; 40)

This could be a description of the art of Borges. It is also a fair starting point for a description of what Carpentier tries to achieve in his account of Haitian history in his next novel, The Kingdom of this World (1949).

However, there were a number of points on which Carpentier could not agree with the Surrealists. Firstly, crucially, they had not adequately theorised the marvellous. Although they claimed that random association was not random, that exercises such as automatic writing brought them into contact with a repressed but vital sphere of being, there appeared to be no significant accumulation of knowledge about this sphere of being. For Carpentier this lack of a coherent conception of the marvellous made coherent political intervention impossible. How was one to discover/create the shaping myths of communities if one's insights were merely the products of "subjective fantasy"?

Further, for Breton the poetic act was sacred and its products

less important. He was involved with regaining lost skills and the lost innocence and purity of language. Balakian relates that for Breton "success in its worldly sense is an anathema...it simply means the attainment of limited goals...success only brings with it complacency. Not only successful persons, but successful nations, including his own, are the object of scorn" (Balakian 1971; 72). For Carpentier, on the other hand, the product was vital as it must influence the world. Fuelled perhaps by his sense of otherness as a Latin American, Carpentier was trying to discover American essences, not some kind of supralogic of a collective dream reality.

Read had written that

before the age of reason art was supernatural. Between the super-real and the supernatural there is only a difference of age, of evolution. The supernatural is associated with a religious view of life. But both agree in rejecting the "real" or the "natural" as the only aspects of existence. (Read 1971; 57)

In Spengler's terms this "difference of age, of evolution" was crucial--as we shall see. Carpentier desired a vision of a future for Cuba, for Latin America, independent of the evolution of European civilization. He was trying to disentangle his position from European dreams of renewal, and for this he needed a new theory of history. He found it in Spengler's The Decline of the West.

Spengler argued that "buried deep under a mass of tangible 'facts' and 'dates'" which constitute this "fleeting form-world" is to be found the "phenomenon of Great Cultures", and that it is this phenomenon which gives the world its "meaning and substance"

(Spengler 1932; 104). It is clear that such a philosophy, according to which "history is not...a mere sum of past things without intrinsic order or inner necessity, but... an organism of rigorous structure and significant articulation" (Spengler 1932; 104), would appeal to thinkers trying to discover/invent/represent a "Latin American reality" out of the chaotic and complex histories of that region.

Spengler's cyclical notion of history freed him from the pessimistic idea that all cultures (now often identified with nation states) were evolving linearly and inevitably along the same scale toward the same ideal of a rationally ordered Enlightenment society. Pessimistic because Europe was at this time witnessing in the rise of fascism a kind of homicidally parochial megalomania which had infused the rational bureaucratic apparatus. The fall of Republican Spain and the outbreak of World War Two were to send many Latin American expatriates scrambling back to Latin America (not to mention a good number of Europeans)--creating something of a boom in literary and intellectual activity there and infusing the scene with the ideas and enthusiasms of the European avant-garde.

Further, Spengler's distinction between "culture" and "civilization" was very influential for Carpentier (and for many other Latin American intellectuals). For Spengler, "culture" represents the dynamic growth stage of a society during which it inhabits its culture fully and unselfconsciously, and "civilization" represents the declining phase of a society which has attained (a crippling) self-reflexivity and has lost contact with the well-springs of

being (5). In this schema, the "New World found itself in a moment of faith--prior to the moment of reflexivity, while Europe felt estranged from the forms of its own culture and searched in laws and codes of universal pretensions, like Surrealism, the mystery of creation irretrievably lost" (Echevarría 1977; 124).

In summary, then, Carpentier came to distance himself from Surrealism because in his search for a unique "marvellous American reality" he identified with Spengler's notion that "cultures, like organisms, have homologous evolutions" independently of one another, and that a culture "blooms on the soil of an exactly-definable landscape, to which, plant-wise it remains bound" (Spengler 1932; 106). He thus could not accept the Surrealist idea that there was some sort of supralogic common to all humankind despite superficial differences in its manifestations in myth, dream, hallucination and so forth (6).

Further, as a non-European, Carpentier felt estranged from the movements' project to reform European civilization. Ironically, the very anti-nationalism and anti-ethnicity which may have made Surrealism more accessible to the culture-shocked Latin American are what in the end made identification with the movement impossible for him. He also came to feel that the movement was moving away from a faith in magic--in the marvellous in the real--towards an exhibitionistic exoticism and sensationalism which attempted to produce the marvellous through the use of self-conscious "literary tricks". He thus came to see Surrealism as merely a "[code] of the fantastic", a symbol of a civilization which had lost touch with

"the mystery of creation" (Echevarría 1977; 125).

Spengler's idea that civilizations develop independently of one another (although they all go through a cycle of development and then decay) gave Carpentier the hope that the religions, the magic of his native country and region were not merely regressive or reactionary forces. They could be read as the first flowerings of a youthful and developing culture. A visit to Haiti in 1943 (7) seemed to support this reading, as it appeared that the revolutions and eventual liberation of Haiti were (and remain) the products of Vodou traditions and inspirations and were not exclusively attributable to European Enlightenment influences. Carpentier believed that in America one had access to the marvellous in everyday life. He wrote in his prologue to The Kingdom of this World that "because of its virginal landscape, its gestation, its ontology, the Faustic [8] presence of Indians and blacks, because of the Revelation constituted by its discovery, by the fruitful racial mixtures that it favoured, Latin America is far from having exhausted its wealth of mythologies" (in Echevarría 1977; 123). Not surprisingly, Echevarría sums up Carpentier's artistic endeavour in the forties as a "search for origins, the recovery of history and tradition, the foundation of an autonomous American consciousness serving as a basis for a literature faithful to the New World" (Echevarría 1977; 103).

Significantly, Carpentier situates three of his major novels (The Kingdom of this World, Explosion in a Cathedral, and Baroque Concierto) in the period of the late eighteenth/nineteenth-century

when Enlightenment ideas were beginning to have some impact on colonial policy (if not always on the colonies) and nationalist sentiments were beginning to stir in Latin America (9). The turn of the eighteenth-century also marks the beginning of that great re-discovery and re-imagining of Latin America which took place in the Romantic period with the recovery and publication of early colonial texts and of some indigenous writings (the better to realise nationalist projects), and the descriptions of the travelling naturalists and archaeologists. It may also mark, in the light of what I have argued previously, the period in which the novel failed to perform its myth-making function.

It is almost as though Carpentier was trying to go back, to recover this momentous period--which constituted the beginnings of the long struggle for independence of Haiti. He attempted this recovery through an effort to recreate the discourses of the period. He tried to let its texts speak through a reworking of incredibly detailed documentation in the form of a compressed historical allegory. Taking Bello's lesson to heart, Carpentier's new novelistic method entailed "completing" the fragmentary and partisan account of Haiti's struggle to independence and against neo-colonialism which survived in the form of diaries, letters, official records and the like. Obviously, a large component of this "filling in" entailed a representation of the views of the illiterate slaves (10), and it is chiefly in these segments of the novel that Carpentier resorts to magic realism.

Carpentier did not want his "filling in" to be merely the

product of his individual fantasies, however. Thus he structured his material according to the magical number symbolism of indigenous American sacred traditions (11). This was also in line with Spengler's belief that "history is not... a mere sum of things past without intrinsic order or inner necessity, but... an organism of rigorous structure and significant articulation" (Spengler 1932; 104). Of course, the articulation of Haitian history with its strong African magical traditions within a framework of American Indian magical conceptions of time and space is incongruous to say the least. What this highlights is the tension within Carpentier's magic realism: between his usage of specific magical traditions (Vodou and Mayan sacred traditions) and his belief in an intrinsic magical dimension to Latin American reality.

The Kingdom of this World is set primarily of the island of San Domingo (now Haiti/Dominican Republic) and "deals with Haitian history from 1760 to 1820" (Karsen 1975; 987). The perceived vitality of the black slave Ti Noël (who is the principle focalizer of the novel), as opposed to his weak European master M. Lenormand de Mézy, is made immediately apparent. The slave chooses the stud for his master, "who knew the slave's gift for judging horseflesh" (Carpentier 1975; 9), and rides him whereas his master rides a "lighter limbed sorrel" (Carpentier 1975; 9). The identification of the black slaves with animal vitality and virility is a pervading motif in the novel, and is opposed to the suggested decadence and relative impotence of the Europeans.

This Spenglerian opposition is extended through the juxtaposing

of a passage describing a number of prints hanging outside a bookstore depicting the frivolities of French courtly life--with a passage in which the Mandingue slave Macandal speaks of "the great migrations of tribes, of age-long wars, of epic battles in which the animals had been the allies of men" (Carpentier 1975; 12). Macandal makes the comparison explicit when he argues that "in Africa the king was warrior, hunter, judge, and priest [whereas] in France, in Spain, the king sent his generals to fight in his stead; he was incompetent in legal matters, and allowed himself to be scolded by any trumpery friar" (Carpentier 1975; 12).

In The Kingdom of this World we find Carpentier fascinated by the story-teller/shaman Macandal, envious of his rhetorical power over men and women and the perceived authenticity of his vision. We are told that Macandal's "deep, opaque voice made him irresistible to the Negro women", and that "his narrative arts... held the men spellbound" (Carpentier 1975; 14). As Williamson points out, "Macandal's [sic] extraordinary power to seduce and marvel his listeners makes him the guardian, and in a sense the creator, of whatever cultural identity the black slaves might have in common" (Williamson 1975; 78). It is the seductive and shaping powers of the shaman that Carpentier desires and his struggle is to root them in a literary form.

However, Macandal and his African mythology cannot provide the basis for a Latin American myth of origins. Macandal's subversive discourse is founded upon the exclusivity of ethnic identity. He tells his fellow slaves about the "great kingdoms of Popo, of

Arada, of the Nagos, or the Fulah" (Carpentier 1975; 11), and mentions various generic supernatural figures. This kind of recourse to ethnic identity (Macandal is often simply referred to as "the Mandingue") is exactly what Carpentier is trying to transcend. Further, Macandal's authority is predicated on his ability to access supernatural powers. He is believed to have access to the "truth". For instance, we are told that "[a]lthough Ti Noel had little learning, he had been instructed in these truths by the deep wisdom of Macandal" (Carpentier 1975; 12). However, these "truths" seem to be the learned and memorised sort which I showed in Chapter One characterised Aztec society and which so compromised their ability to adapt to unfamiliar circumstances.

In Spenglerian terms, Haiti's African slaves should enjoy an enabling immediacy and spontaneity denied to the self-reflexive individual of the declining civilization of the West. They should demonstrate unbridled confidence in their abilities and in the dominant myths of their cultures. In sympathy with this view, Carpentier reveals in his rendition of Macandal's magically-informed world-view an aspiration to a pre-Enlightenment ethos, to a literature of miracles and faith akin to the chivalric epics, to a time when fable and history were one. This springs from a personal longing for completion and cohesion, for identity beyond the hindrances and suppressions of rationality and empirical fact (such as his being of European descent), a longing which is essentially romantic. It is romantic in Northrop Frye's sense of romance when he says:

[r]eality for romance is an order of existence most readily associated with the word identity... [Identity] is existence before 'once upon a time', and subsequent to 'and they lived happily ever after'. What happens in between are adventures, or collisions with external circumstances, and the return to identity is a release from the tyranny of these circumstances. Illusion for romance, then, is an order of existence that is best called alienation. Most romances end happily, with a return to a state of identity, and begin with a departure from it.

(in Williamson 1987; 87)

The African kings Macandal tells of are a celebration of complete self-identity and vibrant spontaneity and strength. They represent a masculine-centred version of the kind of completeness aspired to in the romances of the founding fictions, in which lovers found their complement in one another and the reader experienced a narrative yearning for an undivided society in which their unity could flourish. In these novels the heroes-turned-husbands could explore their feminine, sensitive sides and the heroines could manifest their stereotypically heroic/masculine qualities. Macandalian legends of African kings share with the erotic rhetoric of the founding fictions and the Surrealist desire to liberate the repressed psychic dimensions of the self the desire to create a better world through a fuller and more integrated knowledge and expression of the self.

The difficulty with this vision is that these "cultures" would appear to make spontaneity and immediacy virtually impossible for most of their adherents. They are dependent on the guidance of the gods or ancestors, mediated by the shaman. At one point in the novel, Macandal disappears and is gone for the whole rainy season. For Ti Noël, the "disappearance of Macandal means also the

disappearance of that world evoked by his tales" (Carpentier 1975; 19). It appears that, at least at this stage, the mythic past evoked by the Mandingue has not generated a living and productive faith in the slave. It has not taken root in the present. Like Ngũgi's Kenyans in his Matigari (1989), Ti Noël awaits a saviour to take control of his liberation.

The disjuncture between Macandal's mythical Afro-centric vision of reality and the realities of the historical moment and location in which the novel unfolds is revealed through a terrible accident. Chapter Two finds Ti Noël sitting listening to the Mandingue speaking of Africa while he is feeding sugar cane into the plantation's mill. His eulogy is suddenly interrupted when the horse which turns the mill stumbles, and the Mandingue emits a "howl so piercing and so prolonged that it reached the neighbouring plantations" (Carpentier 1975; 15). His arm had been dragged into the machine and crushed. Such Surrealistic narrative juxtapositioning anticipates the magic realism of Márquez and Rushdie, calling attention to the violence of the confrontation between the rationalist and materialist civilization of the industrialised West (symbolised by the machine) and the more feudal and mythological cultures of the "Third World" peoples enslaved by it.

Incapacitated, Macandal is put in charge of pasturing the cattle. It is with the leisure afforded him by this task that he is drawn into the landscape of the island, into an exploration of the minutiae of the insect and plant world. The reader is likewise drawn into the consideration of the properties of seeds and capers,

peppers, pods, creepers, vines and fungi, by the baroque tendrils of Carpentier's prose. It becomes a search for the magical (in Éliphas Lévi's sense) in the real. Macandal's new interest in the properties of the island's plants draws him out of the mythical past insofar as it is at a remove from the present. He has literally had to have a piece of his old self cut off in order to engage with the "new world" he finds himself in. Through contact with an old witch he is brought closer to an integration of his mythical knowledge and rhetorical powers with the vital present and magical powers of the island. In line with the Surrealists' conception of the female principle as being closer to nature, she serves as a catalyst for the encounter with the marvellous in the real. Macandal finds poison, a weapon and a means for rebellion, rooted in the soil of San Domingo. One might say he is now living in the kingdom of this world, and that his magic is rooted in the real.

The last chapter of Part One of the novel represents a crisis in the narration. The magical interpretations of the black slaves are juxtaposed with the empirically factual interpretations of the whites within a single space: the city square in which the colonists have prepared "a gala function for Negroes whose splendour no expense has been spared" (Carpentier 1975; 30)--the execution by fire of the captured Macandal.

The lack of real gravity or of any conviction in the whites' ceremony is clearly presented. We are told that the Governor "rehearsed" the gesture by which he intended to signal the lighting

of the fire the "evening before in front of a mirror" (Carpentier 1975; 31). The colonists have set up this empty ritual to frighten their "superstitious" slaves, and have no conviction in its significance beyond that which they erroneously hope their slaves will confer upon it. The fire begins to "rise towards the Mandingue, licking his legs" (Carpentier 1975; 31). Macandal begins to gesture with his insecurable stump of an arm, "howling unknown spells and violently thrusting forwards. The bonds fell off and the body of the Negro rose in the air, flying overhead, until it plunged into the black waves of the sea of slaves. A single cry filled the square: 'Macandal saved!'" (Carpentier 1975; 31-32).

This is a typically magic real moment, and chaos ensues in the square. Amid the confusion, however, the narrator reveals that "Macandal, held by ten soldiers, had been thrust head-first into the fire, and that a flame fed by his burning hair had drowned his last cry" (Carpentier 1975; 32). The slaves return laughing to their plantations, believing firmly that "Macandal had kept his word, remaining in the kingdom of this world. Once more the whites had been outwitted by the Mighty Powers of the Other Shore" (Carpentier 1975; 32). But the reader knows what "really happened". Has Carpentier's narrative "leap of faith" fallen short? Has he chosen recorded western history over the slaves' account of events? Perhaps; but perhaps it is that Macandal was never enough in the "kingdom of this world"? Perhaps his individualism and the faith in supernatural intervention he cultivated in the other slaves was the key to his failure.

However, the power and shaping potential of myth--as manifested in the slaves' version of events in the square, as opposed to the "rational" observations of the Europeans, is vindicated at the conclusion of this first part of the novel. This productive power is, once more, demonstrated in the form of virility. The night after the execution Ti Noël sires twins, while his master sits in bed and "[comments] with his devout wife on the Negroes' lack of feeling at the torture of one of their own--drawing therefrom a number of philosophical considerations on the inequality of the human races which he planned to develop in a speech larded with Latin quotations" (Carpentier 1975; 32).

One wild and stormy night delegates from the various plantations of the Plaine du Nord are summoned to the heart of the Bois Caïman. When they are all assembled, shivering in the forest, a mighty voice rings out. It is the voice of Bouckman, the Jamaican, and his speech is full of invocation and spells. He informs the slaves that "some very powerful [French] gentlemen had declared that the Negroes should be given their freedom" (Carpentier 1975; 40). The landowners of the Cap, however, had refused to comply with this. Bouckman announces that a "pact has been sealed between the initiated on this side of the water and the great Loas of Africa to begin the war when the auspices were favourable" (Carpentier 1975; 40).

Bouckman denounces the "white mens' God" and exhorts the slaves to "listen to the cry of freedom within ourselves" (Carpentier 1975; 40). A ritual ensues in which chants and praises are sung and

a pig is slain. All the slaves drink of the pig's blood and swear obedience to Bouckman. A "general staff of the insurrection" (Carpentier 1975; 41) are named. It appears that this will be more of a "peoples' revolution" than was Macandal's.

A further reference to French Enlightenment thinkers is included when the slaves decide to ask the Abbé de la Heye, "an admirer of Voltaire who had shown signs of unequivocal sympathy for the Negroes ever since he had read the Declaration of the Rights of Man" (Carpentier 1975; 41-42), to draw up a proclamation for them. Thus we have an intriguing mix of Enlightenment influences and Vodou fermenting a revolution against the settlers and their god. This is the first glimpse of the possibility of a syncretist culture for Haiti, visible in the slaves' desire to enter the realm of the written in wanting to issue their declaration of defiance and demands for justice in the public world of letters. They would appear to want to participate fully in the life of the island in a way in which Macandal with his completely separate and antithetical magical world could or would not.

Chapter Three of part two finds M. Lenormand de Mézy in a foul mood over the "vapourings of those Utopian imbeciles in Paris whose hearts bled for the black slaves" (Carpentier 1975; 42). The plantation owner grumbles that it is easy to "dream of the equality of men of all races between faro hands in the Café de la Régence" (Carpentier 1975; 42), far from the "realities" of colonial life. The trouble was, these "dreams" had borne fruit: "[i]n May, the Constituent Assembly, a mob of liberalists full of theories from

the *Encyclopédie*, had voted to give the Negroes, sons of manumitted slaves, political rights" (Carpentier 1975; 43). This is a rather backhanded tribute to the role of Europeans, and those of the Enlightened French intelligentsia in particular, in the emancipation of Latin American peoples from the shackles of European slavery. Their ignorance of the situation in the colonies is clear, and, as we learn, their resolutions have little effect on European attitudes in the colonies.

The magical powers invoked by Bouckman had seemed to offer a means of organising a broad-based rebellion against the oppressive rule of the colonists. Unfortunately, as Francois Duvalier (ruler of Haiti from 1957-1971) was also to discover over a century later, while Vodou certainly subverted colonial rule and continues to be a motivating force in Haitians' struggles against tyranny, it cannot successfully be politicized as it lacks any form of hierarchy which can be exploited to centralise and organise control of it. Bouckman's uprising degenerates into a drunken shambles of looting, raping and destruction which is eventually quelled by the more disciplined colonial forces.

By the end of the campaign, the colony's Governor, M. Blancheland, is in a state of near breakdown. In the middle of raving on to M. Lenormand de Mézy about the imminent demise of the colony, he mentions Vodou, something de Mézy has given little thought to up to now. He recalls that a lawyer, Moreau de Saint-Méry (whom Carpentier used as a source), "had collected considerable information on the savage practices of the witch doctors in the hills, bringing out

the fact that some of the Negroes were snake-worshippers" (Carpentier 1975; 46-47). M. Lenormand de Mézy is filled with uneasiness by this recollection, realizing that "the slaves evidently had a secret religion that upheld and united them in their revolts" (Carpentier 1975; 47). He realises that they probably practised this religion under his nose for years, but excuses his oversight with the justification that he is a "civilized" man: "could a civilized person have been expected to concern himself with savage beliefs of people who worshipped a snake?" (Carpentier 1975; 47). Thus, while he faces ruin because of the power Vodou has to subvert his "civilization", he stubbornly insists on dismissing it because it is "savage", "uncivilized". This even though he, a Mason, had gabbled out every prayer he could remember and had fumbled with a rosary upon discovering the violated corpse of his wife.

Carpentier's description of the uprising in which the slaves finally overthrow the colonists is a pivotal point in his use of magic realism in the novel. He writes that

Ougon Badagri guided the cold steel charges against the last redoubts of the Goddess Reason. And, as in all combats deserving of memory because someone had made the sun stand still or brought down the walls with a trumpet blast, in those days there were men who covered the mouths of the enemy cannon with their bare breasts and men who had the power to deflect leaden bullets from their bodies.
(Carpentier 1975; 61)

The Biblical references are both drawn from a particularly martial book of the Old Testament (Joshua ch.10 vs.12-14, and Joshua ch.6.v.20, respectively). While the Christian god is not acknowledged, the tales are presented/used as powerful metaphoric tools, inspirations to heroic action. They are examples of the founding

and consolidating myths of "great cultures". It was in the revolutions which liberated Latin America from colonial rule and which created modern Latin American nation-states that Carpentier hoped to find such myths. He intended to found a Latin American literature which could reveal these origins and stimulate organic growth in their progeny. However, by this stage in the novel, the magical is already beginning to be subjected to the dictates of Carpentier's critical project. He writes about "all combats deserving of memory", offering an analysis thereof illustrated with examples of analogous instances in literature. This is an inherently reflective and abstract account of the actual uprising which liberated Haiti. It is compressed by means of the intellectual filter we call allegory.

In Section Three of the novel the aged Ti Noël obtains his freedom and buys a passage on a fishing smack back to Santo Domingo. He believes he is returning to "a land where slavery had been abolished forever" (Carpentier 1975; 65). However, the old man is captured and enslaved by the soldiers of Haiti's first monarch, Henri Christophe. Henri Christophe has put himself above the gods, we learn. He insults St. Peter for having sent another storm against his fortress (and in Carpentier's work natural phenomena are often symbolic of supernatural forces, which can effortlessly sweep away the works of men) and shrugs off his excommunication "by a French Capuchin" (Carpentier 1975; 79).

Henri Christophe and Queen Marie-Louise and their court attend the Mass of the Assumption in the church of Limonade (against the

advice of all, as the king had immured the former French archbishop of his court there, and the populace is hostile "recalling all too well, there in that fertile land, the crops lost because the men were working on the Citadel" (Carpentier 1975; 80)). The king feels oppressed. He suspects that somewhere in the city someone is trying to practice Vodou on him. He hears drums, which do not bode well for him.

Then, as the offertory is beginning, the Spanish priest shrinks back, the queen drops her rosary as the king reaches for his sword. For another priest has arisen before the altar, and speaks with a thunderous voice from a lipless and toothless mouth: "[t]he name of Corneille Breille stuck in the throat of Henri Christophe, leaving him dumb. Because it was the immured Archbishop, whose death and decay were known to all, who stood there before the high altar in his vestments intoning the Dies Irae" (Carpentier 1975; 81).

At his intonement of the "Rex tremendae majestatis", "a thunderbolt that deafened only [Christophe's] ears struck the church tower, shivering all the bells at once. The preceptors, the thuribles, the chorister's stand, the pulpit had been cast down. The king lay on the floor paralysed, his eyes riveted on the roof beams" (Carpentier 1975; 82). Christophe is carried from the church, "mumbling curses, threatening all the inhabitants of Limonade with death if a rooster so much as crowed" (Carpentier 1975; 82). He is taken to Sans Souci and dumped, still paralysed, on his bed. The court doctors rub all manner of potions on his inert arms and legs, to no avail. The Queen, etiquette thrown to

the winds, squats in a corner of the room over a little fire "watching over the boiling of a root brew" (Carpentier 1975; 83). It seems that Vodou is reasserting its power, and "at moments a rhythm coming from the distant heights mingled strangely with the Ave Maria the women were saying at the throne room, arousing unacknowledged resonances in more than one breast" (Carpentier 1975; 83).

This passage is interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, it narrates a distinctly magic real moment. The events in the church described here actually took place, although Carpentier has slightly rearranged them and materialised Christophe's terrible vision. That the vision is only Christophe's is mentioned only obliquely when we are told that the thunderbolt (and recall his insulting of St. Peter for sending storms against his lightning-blasted towers) "deafened only his ears" (Carpentier 1975; 82). In the chronicle from which the episode is taken, the Spanish priest is ordered to perform a Mass in the church, and then is horrified to see the king fall to the ground with the name of Corneille Breille on his lips, gashing his head open in the fall. In Carpentier's retelling of these events the king's vision is given material form and it is ambiguous as to whether the priest and the Queen are also horror-struck by it or are reacting to the king's strange behaviour.

This is partly achieved through the narrative's vagueness on chronology at this point. We are first told that the Spanish priest shrinks back, then that the Queen drops her rosary, and only then

that the king reaches for his sword. His action is quite in keeping with theirs and there is no hint at this stage that they may be reacting to his actions, as at this point the king's vision is described to us. We are told that the church bells are shivered, and that the precentors, the thuribles, the chorister's stand and the pulpit are cast down by the impact of the thunderbolt. This realistic detail seems to give some empirical substance to the supernatural events experienced by the king.

This episode is a microcosmic illustration of what Carpentier is doing with the history of Haiti in the novel as a whole. He interprets historical events in the light of deeper rhythms he perceives in the historical process. Thus the chronology of the events described in the novel is reshaped to fit cycles of birth and death, beginnings and endings. In the same way that the Surrealists sought the larger movements of being that underlie the epiphenomenon of all human consciousness and its empirical experience of history, Carpentier sought the rhythms and essences that shaped and defined Latin American history. He also extends narrow rationalist definitions of the real to include the needs, fears and delusions of the human psyche. After all, in this particular case they contributed to shaping historical reality in precipitating the downfall of Henri Christophe's monarchy.

With the overthrow of Christophe, which is presented as a shrugging off of the false constraints of European civilization by a still-vibrant and virile culture, the Spenglerian vision espoused by Carpentier in much of this novel would surely mean that the

development of Haitian culture would now generate a rich and harmonious society. Indeed, for Ti Noël the ruined manor house of M. Lenormand de Mézy becomes a sort of palace for the apparently senile old man, where he holds court and "[issues] orders to the wind" (Carpentier 1975; 105). These orders are the "edicts of a peaceable government, inasmuch as no tyranny of whites or Negroes seemed to offer a threat to his liberty" (Carpentier 1975; 105).

Following an altogether more cruel realisation of cyclical history, however, Ti Noël awakes one morning to find "his" lands being measured and divided by arrogant French-speaking Mulattoes in European garb. The next day he discovers that they have taken "hundreds of Negro prisoners" and are "directing vast operations of ploughing and clearing" (Carpentier 1975; 107). The old man begins to "lose heart", we are told, "at this endless return of chains, this rebirth of shackles, this proliferation of suffering, which the more resigned began to accept as proof of the uselessness of all revolt" (Carpentier 1975; 108). A cyclical notion of history can also be a curse! Spengler's conception of historical process may perhaps more accurately be represented as a spiral repeatedly ascending to a peak and then collapsing in upon itself. At any rate, the old man decides that he will find no happiness in the kingdom of this world in his time in human guise.

Ti Noël decides to imitate Macandal and enter the animal and insect worlds. "Once he had come to this decision", we are told, "Ti Noël was astonished at how easy it is to turn into an animal when one has the necessary powers" (Carpentier 1975; 108). He

becomes a bird, a stallion, a wasp, an ant. However, these metamorphoses do not deliver him from the troubles of this world. As an ant he finds himself slaving away as he had under de Mézy's overseers and Henri Christophe's guards, and as the Negroes of the Plaine are forced to do under the Mulattoes in the present. As a stallion he narrowly escapes getting gelded.

In the final chapter, the geese of Sans Souci (Henri Christophe's palace) arrive on "Ti Noël's lands", to his great delight. He admires these birds, for in his experience "[g]eese were orderly beings, with principles and systems, whose existence denied all superiority of individual over individual of the same species" (Carpentier 1975; 110). We are told that "the principle of authority represented by the Oldest Gander was a measure whose object was to maintain order within the clan, after the manner of the king or head of the old African assemblies" (Carpentier 1975; 110). Carpentier's description of goose society reads like a combination of a version of Enlightenment social ideals and an idealized version of African society.

Ti Noël magically transforms himself into a goose in order to join this society. However, his attempts to join the clan are repulsed, and Ti Noël quickly comes to see the clan as a "community of aristocrats, tightly closed against anyone of a different caste" (Carpentier 1975; 110-111). It is made "crystal clear to him that being a goose did not imply that all geese were equal" (Carpentier 1975; 111). Ti Noël had "presented himself, without proper family, before geese who could trace their ancestry back four generations.

In a word, he was an upstart, an intruder" (Carpentier 1975; 111).

One must inevitably think of Carpentier himself in this context, wondering how excluded he felt from both the communities mentioned above? He had no roots in Africa, and yet he also felt alienated from his European heritage. He had felt very "other", very Latin American in Paris. Yet what did it mean to be Latin American? His attempt to find Latin American essences, to found an identity on a Latin American origin appeared in the case of Haiti only to have uncovered a palimpsest of origins reaching back beyond Haitian shores which he could not trace.

Ti Noël realises his exclusion from the community of geese is perhaps a punishment for his cowardice in trying to escape the world of men: "Macandal had disguised himself as an animal for years to serve men, not to abjure the world of men" (Carpentier 1975; 111). It is with this realisation that the old man,

resuming his human form, had a supremely lucid moment. He lived, for the space of a heartbeat, the finest moments of his life; he glimpsed once more the heroes who had revealed to him the power and the fullness of his remote African forebears, making him believe in the possible germinations the future held. (Carpentier 1975; 111)

Yet he feels a "cosmic weariness" (Carpentier 1975; 111) descend upon his shoulders. He understands that all his toil and struggle is for people whom he does not know, who in turn will toil and struggle for those unknown to them--who will also not be happy. Man "always seeks a happiness far beyond that which is meted out to him. But man's greatness consists in the very fact of wanting to be better than he is" (Carpentier 1975; 112). Thus the old man can conclude that "bowed down by suffering and duties, beautiful in the

midst of his misery, capable of loving in the face of afflictions and trials, man finds his greatness, his full measure, only in the Kingdom of this World" (Carpentier 1975; 112).

Ti Noël climbs onto his table and declares "war against the new masters, ordering his subjects to march in battle against the insolent works of the mulattoes in power" (Carpentier 1975; 112). Suddenly a cyclone comes tearing across the Plaine du Nord and sweeps away the remnants of the plantation and the miscellany the old man had looted from Sans Souci. Ti Noël is never seen again, "except perhaps by that wet vulture who turns every death to his own benefit and who sat with outspread wings, drying himself in the sun, a cross of feathers which finally folded itself up and flew off into the thick shade of Bois Caïman" (Carpentier 1975; 112-113). Thus the great wind, a force of Nature which sweeps away all the works of men, takes the old man--spiritually still defiant--into itself. We are told about the vulture so that we may infer that it was not a mystical wind which swept the old man away. It is of the Kingdom of this World.

Thus we have Carpentier's dilemma clearly manifested in the conclusion of this novel. Its writing comes out of his researches into Caribbean history in the desire to discover American essences and an American identity. He finds, besides and beyond the influences of the European Enlightenment and of European colonialism, a magical force for change and survival in the Vodou religion of the African slaves on Santo Domingo. However, this faith is rooted in a distant and mythical Africa, something of which

Carpentier cannot be a part. He mentions but does not really explore the ability of Vodou to accommodate, to expand and assimilate other beliefs.

The sympathetic Abbé de la Heye is only briefly mentioned in the novel, and no European characters play consequential sympathetic roles. The ideals of the Enlightenment, symbolised by the *Encyclopédie*, are used as a seat for chewing sugar cane by Ti Noël. French and Spanish culture are held up to ridicule (Spaniards are typically described as even more backward than the French). We are left with a celebration of the power of magic in the form of Vodou to inspire the Negroes struggle for freedom in the Kingdom of this World. Yet its revolutions never achieve lasting freedom from oppression, and tyranny is shown not to be solely a European quality.

Ultimately, Carpentier most probably felt alienated from the African elements in Vodou. They certainly couldn't be described as uniquely American. Macandal and his myths of the "Lords of Back There" constitute a closed circle for the uninitiated. However, he begins to explore the natural life of the island, and through his interaction with the old witch seems to achieve a fuller, more integrated power which culminates in his active rebellion through the poisoning of the whites and their livestock.

We may recall that in Surrealist mythology the female principle is believed to be closer to nature and hence to the marvellous in the real. So here we find an element, a very important element in magic, the importance of nature, which is customarily tied to the particular and the regional. We have seen Macandal's poison take on

a life of its own, a magical life, and this poison is made from a fungus which grows on Santo Domingo. Now the novel ends with a cyclone, an impersonal force of Nature which sweeps all before it. It may be an impersonal force, but it is not void of identity.

When we talk of "a force of nature" we mean an indwelling animating force of an environment, often the cumulative expression of its constituent parts, and in practice we very often refer to it as defined in the context of a particular area generally characterised by some general degree of geographic or systemic coherence. A large part of human self-identity is derived from the physical environment in which we live, and since the earliest times humankind has projected onto the processes and vicissitudes of these environments anthropomorphic qualities. This is of course a bilateral process, and the environment plays a vital role in shaping human beings and their societies. Simply put, the natural environment and its processes offer access for Carpentier to the "genius of the place"--to a uniquely American reality.

Echevarría has written that

Latin American literature centres around a lack, an absence of organic connectedness, and its mainspring is a desire for communion, or, in a Hegelian sense, for totality through re-integration with a lost unity. That leads Latin American writers to invoke "culture" as the ontological and historical entity from which their works have sprung and to which they must return. But the lack is never overcome, for culture becomes in their works an entelechy (in its etymological sense of a finished teleology), a static, reified end product lacking a temporal dimension. (Echevarría 1977; 21)

While I think it is true that Carpentier experiences a "lack" and desires "communion", and seeks "re-integration" through the pursuit

of culture in his historical and in his fictional investigations, I am not convinced that he adopts any "static, reified" notion of culture with which to conclude The Kingdom of this World.

A large measure of the importance of Carpentier's novel lies in the honesty with which it is written, which cannot allow him to compromise his integrity in order to realise his theoretical project. He begins The Kingdom of this World by juxtaposing episodes of the magical culture of Macandal with what he portrays as the European civilization-in-decline. However, the Mandingue's mythical past is just the sort of "entelechy" Echevarría is talking about--it lacks a "temporal dimension" and never takes root in the present. However, due to his accident, Macandal has the leisure to begin to explore the natural life of the island, and transfer his interest from the mythical and distant world of Africa to his new American surroundings. He begins to discover the magical properties of things, the marvellous in the real, and ultimately finds the weapon of his rebellion--poison--in amongst the plants of the island.

Despite his movement from the hermetically separate Africanness toward the possibility of immanent magical powers (even if they have the old names) on Santo Domingo, Macandal's authority rests on a special relationship with these powers which he fails to extend to his followers. Ultimately, he provides the African slaves with a myth of resistance through his martyrdom at the hands of the plantation owners. Of course, the slaves don't believe he really died, but it is important for Carpentier to communicate the "truth"

of the matter for two principle reasons. Firstly, he is aware that in rewriting Haitian history in the fashion in which he does in this novel, he is open to the charge of merely aestheticizing history--a charge that will be levelled at later magic realists like Márquez. He is thus concerned to distinguish his account from a mere fantasy of what might or "should" have happened. Secondly--and in this his political concerns are further revealed--he wishes to avoid the sort of messianism which prevents peoples from taking the struggle for liberation into their own hands. After all, the slaves had waited many years for Macandal to return with all the supernatural forces of Africa behind him and rescue them from their misery.

Where is Carpentier to find his myth of origin in Haitian history? Unfortunately, the uprising which finally led to the overthrow of the Europeans replaced European rule with a tyrannical African monarchy modelled on Napoleonic France. After his description of Macandal's execution, Carpentier's magic realism becomes increasingly qualified. We can infer from the incident in which Henri Christophe has his horrific vision that magic realism is being used to depict the psychological state of one character. Of course, it calls attention to the importance of Christophe's suspicious fears and of his hallucinatory experiences (in a sense, they precipitate his downfall), two dimensions vital to understanding Haitian history which a rationalist historical discourse would ignore.

By Chapter Three, Ti Noël's transformations into various insects

and animals would be more accurately described as allegorical than magical realist. Allegory and fable are characteristic Enlightenment forms, and Carpentier's use of the magical is rather intellectual and didactic by this stage. Unable, it seems, to create a mythology--a sacred tale/s about origins--or to resolve the magical with the real (to inhabit, to participate in culture rather than observe it) Carpentier resists the temptation to falsify history and escape into fantasy. He has Ti Noël conclude that his exclusion from the community of geese is a punishment for his cowardice in trying to escape the world of men.

It is arguably Carpentier's sense of personal alienation from the hope he found in his discovery and recounting of the power of myth and the marvellous in the history of Haiti which informs the "lucid" vision he has Ti Noël experience at the end of his long life. While acknowledging the strength to carry on (an optimistic faith in "the possible germinations the future held") which the myths and traditions of his African background give him, it is a vision which extends beyond the clans of geese (which I have read as a critical portrait of the much idealized societies of old Africa), beyond the genetic chains of ancestry into a vision of the human condition of universal proportions.

Carpentier's attempt to attain and present a more holistic Latin American vision of reality in The Kingdom of this World is thwarted because he ultimately subjects the magical (associated with vitality and spontaneity) to the dictates of his theoretical goals. As the novel progresses, as Carpentier is confronted with

the "endless return of chains" (Carpentier 1975; 108), Breton's fears are realised and the magical element of magical realism is subsumed into the Enlightenment form of allegory. This is clearly demonstrated by the paradox of writing a novel intended to celebrate and assert a non-reflexive, vital cultural possibility--which on first publication was prefaced by a theoretical tract on the marvellousness of Latin American reality. Ultimately, the only substantive magical link Carpentier can claim to Latin American reality is via Nature. Thus the novel ends ambiguously with the defiant Ti Noël--espousing an essentially Enlightenment vision of human destiny--being swept away by the inarticulate power of a cyclone.

CHAPTER FOUR

By now it is well known that Márquez claims his grandmother as the most important single influence on his writing. He relates that

[s]he used to tell me about the most atrocious things without turning a hair, as if it was something she'd just seen. I realized that it was her impassive manner and her wealth of images that made her stories so credible. I wrote One Hundred Years of Solitude using my grandmother's method. (Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 30)

However, as Márquez himself has noted, it was reading Franz Kafka's Metamorphosis which revealed to him that one could employ this style of narration in a literary context. This was a liberating revelation which Márquez explicitly admits freed him from the "chastity belt" of "the rational and extremely academic examples [of literature] I'd come across in secondary school text books" (Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 31).

As I shall argue below, this liberation from the restraints of a rationalist version of realism does not imply a flight into fantasy. It is Márquez's attitude to the magical and Enlightenment ideas of realism which will be the focus of this chapter. It will be seen that Márquez holds up these two modes of comprehending the world as mirrors to one other, each revealing the limitations of the other in its glass. Macondo itself is a place of mirrors ("José Arcadio Buendía dreamed that night that right there a noisy city with houses having mirror walls rose up" (Márquez 1972; 28)), not the transparency of glass. Both the ultra-realism of José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula's magical taboo-regime will be shown to be inadequate modes for apprehending reality, and Márquez's magic

realism emerges as a critique of both of these modes.

At the same time, Márquez's relation to the magical is undoubtedly complex. On the one hand, One Hundred Years of Solitude is driven by the magical fear of incest and the terrible frustration and decay brought upon the Buendía family by their adherence, however unconscious or intermittently, to this taboo regime. On the other, Márquez acknowledges (and celebrates) the magical as an inherent, indeed definitive, aspect of Latin American reality. It is of the first importance to his narrative technique; at the very least he derives his international fame from it as well as his identity as a writer. Moreover, he attributes his ability to tell magical tales to "the exuberant imagination of African slaves, mixed with that of the pre-Colombian natives and added to the Andalusian taste for fantasy and the Galician cult of the supernatural", arguing that this combination "had produced an ability to see reality in a certain magical way" (Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 51)--an ability his grandmother had.

This magical inheritance suggests the possibility of imaginative freedom, an alternative to a dry and restricting, and specifically European, realism. It also suggests the constant possibility of delusion, a predilection for fantasy which has haunted Latin American literature from its inception. Márquez's magic realism proceeds on a knife-edge between magical revelations and the whims of fancy.

In short, in One Hundred Years of Solitude magic is profoundly Janus-faced. At the same time that the magical way of telling stories

Márquez inherited from his grandmother enabled him to write this prodigiously inventive and vital work, it inspired a novel which would also appear to end in a kind of fatalism. In order to clarify Márquez's relationship to the magical and to magic realism itself, a useful point of departure is Edwin Williamson's essay entitled "Magical Realism and the theme of Incest in One Hundred Years of Solitude" (1987 (2)). Here, Williamson argues that "magical realism can be shown to be a manifestation of the malaise that causes the decline of the Buendía family" (Williamson (2) 1987; 46). In doing so he identifies two main trends in recent critical opinion on the nature of magic realism.

The first sees it as something akin to what I have called the aesthetic tendency and have associated with the *ficciones* of Borges. In this view One Hundred Years of Solitude becomes a self-referential, autarchic fictional world. Márquez's magic realism, in this view, involves the aestheticization of the history of Colombia, allowing Márquez to distort history at will to fit his personal political vision and abjuring him of all responsibility to the "real". Or, worse, it may group him together with "certain Latin American writers desperate to take refuge, in their writing, from the injustice and brutality of their continent's unacceptable reality" (Martin 1987; 103).

In order to refute this argument that Márquez has simply "'aestheticized' Latin American history", one must begin by examining the distinction the author himself draws between the magical and the fantastic in the novel itself. A case in point would be José

Arcadio Buendía's descent into madness, or what I prefer to call the fantastical. Deluded by the sales pitches of the Gypsies (for instance Melquíade's pitch for a magnet is that "things have a life of their own" and that "[i]t's simply a matter of waking up their souls" (Márquez 1972; 7)), José Arcadio Buendía becomes quite obsessed with their offerings. We are told explicitly that José's "unbridled imagination always went beyond the genius of nature and even beyond miracles and magic" (Márquez 1972; 7). The results of his misguided pursuit of practical applications for discoveries and inventions such as the magnet and the telescope lead him to "completely [abandon] his domestic obligations" (Márquez 1972; 9). He metamorphoses from being "a kind of youthful patriarch" (Márquez 1972; 14) into "a man lazy in appearance, careless in his dress" (Márquez 1972; 15) who is suspected of madness.

It is interesting to note that José anticipates the destructive potential and materialism that will be generated by an advanced industrial civilization in that he tries to invent a means of using the telescope as a weapon of "solar war" (Márquez 1972; 9), and tries to use a magnet to "extract gold from the bowels of the earth" (Márquez 1972; 7). The magnet and the telescope, of course, are the foundations of the Newtonian universe. It is important to stress, too, that José's interest in the "magic" of Melquíades was not spiritual. Indeed, his pursuit of alchemy was relentlessly materialist. Defeated, finally, in his attempt to uproot Macondo and go in search of "civilization" and the "benefits of science" (Márquez 1972; 18), José lapses into passing on his arcane

knowledge to his sons, and, finally, into madness.

José's madness is born of a sort of ultra-realism, an obsession with materiality and empirical proofs which comes to subjugate his emotional and imaginative needs. At one point in the novel we are told that Melquíades

left the daguerreotype laboratory to the fantasies of José Arcadio Buendía, who had resolved to use it to obtain scientific proof of the existence of God. Through a complicated process of superimposed exposures taken in different parts of the house, he was sure that sooner or later he would get a daguerreotype of God, if He existed, or put an end once and for all to the supposition of His existence.
(Márquez 1972; 55)

By the time he finally lapses into madness, José Arcadio Buendía has become so enslaved to a kind of fanatical realism that he believes that calendar time has stopped because he can find no empirical evidence that it is proceeding: "suddenly I realized that it's still Monday, like yesterday. Look at the sky, look at the walls, look at the begonias. Today is Monday too" (Márquez 1972; 77). We are told that he "spent six hours examining things, trying to find a difference from their appearance on the previous day in the hope of discovering in them some change that would reveal the passage of time" (Márquez 1972; 77). Shortly afterwards he goes berserk and has to be tied to a chestnut tree in a state of "total innocence" (Márquez 1977; 78).

He has by now lost all contact with reality, and inhabits a realm where time stands still (it is always Monday) and a sort of primal innocence prevails in which moral judgement is impossible. Challenged to a game of checkers one day by Father Nicanor, in the "lucidity" of his madness José cannot "understand the sense of a

contest in which the two adversaries have agreed upon the rules" (Márquez 1972; 83). He no longer recognises his relatives and he speaks Latin, the language of his learning which no-one but the old priest Father Nicanor understands (for centuries the Catholic Church preserved its exclusive control over the scriptures and their interpretation through the use of Latin).

Nevertheless, José's madness does not represent a "magical escape" from reality, but an escape into fantasy. Magical world-views have a definite notion of the real, and certainly make judgements on what is not "real" (for instance, the people of Macondo "became indignant over the living images that the prosperous merchant Bruno Crespi projected in the theatre with the lion-head ticket window, for a character who had died and was buried in one film and for whose misfortune tears of affliction had been shed would reappear alive and transformed into an Arab in the next one" (Márquez 1972; 209)), and on what is immoral (José and Úrsula are haunted by the murder of Prudencio Aguilar), whereas fantasy doesn't necessarily posit any such regulative reality (or at least is not bound by any considerations of what is real) or moral norm. Márquez claims to

loathe fantasy... because I believe the imagination is just an instrument for producing reality and that the source of creation is always, in the last instance, reality. Fantasy, in the sense of pure and simple Walt-Disney-style invention without any basis in reality is the most loathsome thing of all.

(Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 31)

Earlier in this same interview he clarifies the crucial distinction between his magic realism and fantasy which critics with an

aestheticist bent and Williamson himself (he writes of magic realism's "ostensible fusion of fantasy and fact" (Williamson (2) 1987; 47)) seem unwilling to allow. Clearly, Márquez believes that there is an ethical imperative--a basic fidelity to the real--attached to the kind of imagination at work in magic realism, an imperative which precludes that form of escapism which is fantasy:

over the years I discovered that you can't invent or imagine just whatever you fancy because then you risk not telling the truth and lies are more serious in literature than in real life. Even the most seemingly arbitrary creation has its rules. You can throw away the fig leaf of rationalism only if you don't then descend into total chaos and irrationality... into fantasy.

(Mendoza/ Márquez 1970; 31)

The latter is precisely the route taken by José Arcadio Buendía. In what is strikingly reminiscent of a Borgesian conceit (and one can only wonder whether it is a covert criticism of the Argentinian's brand of magic realism), he takes to wandering in his mind through an endless series of identical rooms:

[h]e liked to go from room to room, as in a gallery of parallel mirrors, until Prudencio Aguilar would touch him on the shoulder. Then he would go back from room to room, walking in reverse, going back over his trail, and he would find Prudencio Aguilar in the room of reality. But one night, two weeks after they took him to his bed, Prudencio Aguilar touched his shoulder in an intermediate room and he stayed there for ever, thinking that it was the real room.

(Márquez 1970; 133)

As we have seen in Chapter Two of this thesis, it follows from Kantian philosophy that the world which we experience is the only world we can know: a world we have already constructed or interpreted. As a rule, realism tries to reliably reflect this world, to re-present it through using techniques which mimic those Kantian "basic categories" which underpin our perceptions. There is a

counter-tradition to this aesthetic which holds that these techniques of representation are not transparent or objective conduits to "reality". In this view all representations of reality are influenced and directed by various personal, social and political goals. It is these motivations and the ways in which the techniques of realism are manipulated to serve them which are most worthy of our interest and study.

For both Carpentier and Márquez magic realism provides a means of questioning and analysing the ends of particular discourses of European realism, and their adoption by Latin American regimes. The magic realist must do as the magician, the diviner and seer, and read the signs, reconstruct a version of the truth. Garcia Márquez sets about re-telling Colombian history in the spirit in which (as we have seen in Chapter One) Andrés Bello recommended this task should be tackled (1).

Márquez writes that "I was able to write One Hundred Years of Solitude simply by looking at reality, our reality, without the limitations which rationalists and Stalinists through the ages have tried to impose on it in order to make it easier for them to understand" (Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 60). This enables Márquez to call the bluff of realism in his depiction of the 1928 massacre of striking workers by government troops in collusion with the banana company (a pseudonym for the United Fruit Company). In actual historical reality, we know that the "Conservative press, the [Colombian] government, and the company's supporters" drastically "minimized" the "human damage" sustained in the putting down of the workers'

strike (Bell-Vilada 1990; 105). As Bell-Vilada relates,

[c]oncerning casualties for the entire strike, General Cortés Vargas would cite a figure of 40 dead and 100 wounded. By contrast a prominent union leader, Alberto Castrillón, would calculate the dead at Ciénaga alone at 400; for the larger strike he estimated a total of 1,500 dead and 3,500 wounded... (Bell-Vilada 1990; 105)

History text-books produced in Colombia after the massacre, written in a realist documentary mode, omitted the event entirely.

The young lawyer, Jorge Eliecer Gaitán, (after completing a private investigation of the matter), made a public speech denouncing the massacre in 1929. However, "almost nothing of importance concerning these events appeared in Colombia in the forty years up to the publication of One Hundred Years of Solitude. The rest is silence" (Martin 1987; 109). Twenty years after the massacre, Gaitán, now a politician and a leader of the Liberal Party in Colombia, was assassinated. In an already tense Colombia, this assassination sparked off one of the bloodiest and ultimately most senseless of Latin America's civil wars--which came to be called, simply, La Violencia (and which lasted for about two decades (2) from 1948 to the mid-sixties (cf. Theisen 1974; 625)).

Márquez's account of the massacre explodes the myth that the "workers had left the station and had returned home in peaceful groups" (Márquez 1972; 286), that "[n]othing has ever happened in Macondo, nothing has ever happened, and nothing ever will happen" (Márquez 1972; 287). Márquez's account seems to acquiesce in the belief that there is no concrete evidence that a massacre occurred, but he reveals the mechanism through which this myth (perpetuated through exclusion by the history books of Colombia) was created.

Márquez is demanding--and indeed creating--space for a historical truth which according to the evaluative procedures of a rationalist discourse is unlikely at best and on balance unreliable (the "weight of evidence" is against the massacre ever having occurred). In fact, the way in which the novel exposes the supposed non-occurrence of the massacre stands the conventional Enlightenment rationalist notion of myth on its head. Myth, in this view, is a story in which a supernatural agency is invoked to validate the moral of the tale or the status quo it sets up. This is held to be the antithesis of rationalism. However, as Márquez shows us, the only difference in the case of the massacre myth is that the appeal is not to a supernatural agency, but to the authority of the conventions of an absolutised procedure: reason.

The political brutality and interests at work in the Colombian government's "realism" may be said to be revealed in, rather than occluded by, Márquez's fictional account of the massacre. Ironically, describing the "hermeneutical delirium" (Márquez 1970; 279) brought on by the manouverings and manipulations of language of the banana company's lawyers, Márquez writes that the workers demands were dismissed with "decisions which seemed like acts of magic" (Márquez 1970; 278). Decades later, Márquez conjures them back into existence. In doing so, he may be said to provide an effective defense against the aestheticist charge noted above.

The second account of magic realism, in Williamson's view, "derives from Carpentier's early ideas about 'lo real-maravilloso'" (Williamson (2) 1987; 45), and claims that it "expands the

categories of the real so as to encompass myth, magic, and other extraordinary phenomena in Nature or experience which European realism has tended to exclude" (Williamson (2) 1987; 46). This gives Márquez's "particular brand of modernism...a unique[ly] Latin American character" (Williamson) 1987; 45). This is in line with the definition which seems to me most adequate (and Williamson admits that "García Márquez himself has often talked about magical realism in just this way" (Williamson (2) 1987; 45)).

There are many examples of this "[expanding] of the categories of the real" in the novel. One involves the significant role played in the novel by the ghosts of the dead. The most obvious example of this is the haunting of Úrsula and José (in particular) by the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar. Eventually they are driven to leave their town ("[w]e're going to leave this town, just as far away as we can go, and we'll never come back", José assures Prudencio's ghost (Márquez 1970; 26)) and set out on the journey which concludes with their foundation of Macondo. Melquíades, too, returns from the dead (although he is alive--see Márquez 1970; 51). When he finally dies, his ghost returns to help Aureliano decipher his manuscripts (see Márquez 1970; 328). Márquez's intention is not (as is, perhaps Henry James's intention in his The Turn of the Screw) to ruminate upon the possibility of the existence of ghosts, on whether they are merely fictions of overwrought imaginations. These people may be dead, but their ghosts (whatever their status) are active influences in the lives of the living.

As in many "non-European" societies, for many Colombians the

community of the dead is actively "alive"--a series of real presences--shaping the daily existences of the living. What Márquez's magic realism achieves, however, is not a resurrection of superstitions and dogma about the role of the ancestors in the lives of the living. Márquez makes use of such "magical" beliefs about the dead to analyze and explain to the reader the psychological underpinnings of his characters' actions. It is no small part of his achievement to have brought together elements of the primal and the modern, the magical and the procedures of realism.

While it is true that many realist novelists analyze the actions of their characters without any recourse to the magical, I think Márquez's magic realism addresses a dimension of the human psyche which is not adequately dealt with by a strictly realist aesthetics. In Chapter One I ascribed the lasting importance and appeal of the magical to its concern with fundamental existential dilemmas faced by most human beings. These include the need for belonging, for understanding, for protection in a hostile universe, and reassurance in the face of death and the threat of the extinction of the self. In Chapter Two I also mentioned John Berger's claim that in a "post-metaphysical age" the human imagination has persistently sought out "enclaves of the beyond". Ernest Gellner has argued that "Enlightenment rationalism" is "too thin and ethereal to sustain an individual in crisis... In practice, Western intellectuals, when facing personal predicaments, have turned to emotionally richer methods, offering promises of personal recovery, such as psychoanalysis" (Gellner 1992; 86).

It would seem, therefore, that Márquez's enormous popularity, particularly among European readers (for whom many of the specific political and historical references of the novel may be opaque), lies in the way One Hundred Years of Solitude answers to the imaginative needs of his readership. One might say that he "re-enchants" the world. His is not a realism imbued with a hardness towards the "misguided" needs of human beings. It acknowledges and celebrates the ineradicable reality of such imaginative needs, it indulges them, and *although it judges them* when they decline into cynicism or fatalism, it deduces such needs to be inalienable.

Amongst the finest examples of the sort of writing Márquez's magic realism makes possible is contained in the episode of the insomnia plague. The plague is brought to Macondo by Rebeca, who has caught it, it seems, from Indians. It is Visitación, the Indian servant in the Buendía household, who recognises the "sickness whose threat had obliged her and her brother to exile themselves forever from an age-old kingdom where they had been prince and princess" (Márquez 1972; 46). She warns the disbelieving José Arcadio that the insomnia leads to a 'loss of memory' which culminates in "a kind of idiocy that had no past" (Márquez 1972; 46). In five pages (pp.46-50) Márquez creates an allegory for the cultural genocide wreaked on the Indians of America by the Spaniards, and the dangerous legacy of such actions. After all, the conqueror who tries to obliterate from history the civilization it has defeated (and inevitably absorbed) must also deny its origins (and those of its contemporary society) in that conquest.

In this parable the Macondites try to survive the loss of memory by writing the names of things down, and then the explicit purpose of these things. However, these words have no past, no ground in reality, and ultimately "the system demanded so much vigilance and moral strength that many succumbed to the spell of an imaginary reality, one invented by themselves, which was less practical for them but more comforting" (Márquez 1970; 49-50). Magic realism requires a constant vigilance (as does human life), a balancing of the requirements of "reality" on the one hand, with imaginative needs on the other. In writing a novel addressed primarily to Colombians or Latin Americans Márquez treads the tightrope of balancing the emotional needs of a community manifested in the romanticism of the founding myths of nations, with the necessity of asserting certain truths or realities about this community (such as their ethnic heterogeneity and the dangers of cultural exclusivism or "incest").

It is worth recalling once more Márquez's comment to the effect that he was "able to write One Hundred Years of Solitude simply by looking at the reality, our reality, without the limitations which rationalists and Stalinists through the ages have tried to impose on it to make it easier for them to understand" (Mendoza/ Márquez 1983; 59-60). By embracing these many dimensions of Latin American life, as well as the characteristic shape it has given to a people's imagination, Márquez seems to be arguing that his magic realism can embody (in its techniques) and portray Latin American reality more adequately.

Williamson, however, argues that such positive readings of magical realism cannot account for the pessimism of the novel and the disintegration and collapse of Macondo. In his reading of One Hundred Years of Solitude the decline and fall of Macondo is a direct result of this magic realism. Williamson cites the example of José Arcadio Buendía's first encounter with ice. He calls attention to the "comic irony" created by the disparity between the reader's knowledge and José's "innocent awe" (Williamson (2) 1987; 46), arguing that "the sense of the marvellous afforded us by magical realism is...transient, for soon enough García tips the wink at his reader" (Williamson (2) 1987; 47).

Thus even though (most of) the residents of Macondo believe that Remedios the Beauty ascended to heaven, "as far as the reader is concerned, the fact of its being narrated in the text does not strengthen its claim to literal, historical truth. Rather the opposite; it de-mystifies the phenomenon because of the underlying assumption (as in the ice scene above) that the reader's world-view is at odds with that of the characters" (Williamson (2) 1987; 47). Thus Williamson can conclude that "in spite of its ostensible fusion of fantasy and fact, magical realism is conceived as a wilfully specious discourse in the very act of its being read by the kind of reader García Márquez is addressing" (Williamson (2) 1987; 47).

What Williamson's criticisms really reveal is an inability to appreciate the balancing act Márquez achieves in his magic realism between the demands of "reality" and the needs of the imagination.

On the most basic level, the episode in which Remedios the Beauty ascends to heaven represents a typically magic realist presentation of a miraculous event given credence (or "balanced") by the naturalistic detail of the description:

Amaranta felt a mysterious trembling in the lace on her petticoats and she tried to grasp the sheet so that she would not fall down at the instant in which Remedios the Beauty began to rise. Úrsula, almost blind at the time, was the only person who was sufficiently calm to identify the nature of that determined wind and she left the sheets to the mercy of the light as she watched Remedios the Beauty waving goodbye in the midst of the flapping sheets that rose up with her, abandoning with her the environment of beetles and dahlias and passing through the air with her as four o'clock in the afternoon came to an end, and they were lost forever with her in the upper atmosphere where not even the highest-flying birds of memory could reach her. (Márquez 1972; 221)

The "mysterious trembling" is felt by Amaranta "in the lace on her petticoats", and Remedios is borne aloft with (or by?) "flapping sheets" just as "four o'clock in the afternoon came to an end" (a time which is both precise and vague). The fact that the "sense of the marvellous" conveyed to the reader in such a passage may be "transient" is irrelevant to Márquez's project. He is not trying to detail a blue-print of reality. After all, he has a hurricane destroy his fictional world completely at the end of his novel.

More broadly speaking, Williamson's failure to appreciate Márquez's balancing of the demands of reality and the needs of the imagination is apparent in his one-dimensional reading of the function of magic in the text. Magic works in the text, as I have already suggested, in complicated and contradictory ways. It works both at the level of Úrsula's magic and taboo-regime and the superstitions of the Macondites (as part of events in the book),

and it works at (makes possible) the level of Márquez's narrative technique and how this shapes reader-response. That is to say, Márquez's magic realism works at different levels in different ways.

Márquez does not limit his fictional project to "literal, historical truth". It also embraces, for instance, the psychological truth of fairy tales, presented through stories which are patently not literally or historically true--but which are nevertheless immensely and enduringly popular and effective. In One Hundred Years of Solitude Márquez is trying to break down precisely the sort of barriers realist critics such as Williamson create between "literal, historical truth" and the realm of the human psyche; he sets out to explore (as Breton had wanted to) their intertwined and reciprocal relations.

The fact that the novel ends with the destruction of Macondo does not necessarily entail a political pessimism for the novel is simply not concerned with a "realistic" (in the Enlightenment rationalist sense) portrayal of Colombian or even Latin American history. Rather, Márquez is concerned to offer a holistic portrait of the region in the terms in which, he believes, its inhabitants experience it. He is not simply concerned with writing against the concrete manifestations of oppression--in fact the novel is arguably more concerned with the imaginative legacy of colonialism and conservative elements of indigenous sacred traditions.

The end of the novel is profoundly satisfying to the reader's imagination; it achieves closure and restores him/her to reality in

the same way that the formulaic "and they lived happily ever after" does in fairytales. Customarily, at the end of African folktales, it is said an "elephant has to come and blow the story away". Márquez does not pretend to have magically changed reality--only to have revealed (and judged) some of the ways in which it has come to be interpreted in Latin America. And after all, the very incest and fatalism which Macondo comes to represent are what is most harshly judged in the novel; it is this fictional community which is destroyed at its conclusion.

Further, Márquez is not simply playing arbitrarily with "fantasy and fact", but more specifically with the discourse of the magical and with the discourse of Enlightenment rationalism. He has not, as Dan Jacobsen claims, "so contrived things that he can say more or less what he likes at any point, and can arrange for almost anything to happen next" (Jacobsen 1988; 86). In *Úrsula and José Buendía*, Márquez introduces--in exaggerated form--the two poles of magic and realism. He will go on to show that both of these ways of looking at the world are open to delusion and fantasy, that reason can be as much a fantasy as fantasy can be delusion, and indeed that Latin American reality in particular is haunted by such confusions.

How does the magic of the Macondites, and *Úrsula* in particular, fare in One Hundred Years of Solitude? Is the extinction of memory achieved by the realism of the Colombian government combatted or resisted in any way by *Úrsula's* magical regime? While the mysterious Melquíades manages to restore the Macondites memory to

them, and has recorded the massacre in his prophetic account of the history of Macondo, he left no living legacy of magical wisdom. The Macondites, like the rest of their countrymen, believe the official story (Márquez 1970; 285). The version of events related by the child José Aurelio Segundo had raised up above his head at the demonstration was disbelieved by all and dismissed as the ravings of a "crazy old man" (Márquez 1970; 282). A few years after his death, it will even be argued in the "imaginary brothel" on the outskirts of Macondo that "Colonel Aureliano Buendía...was a figure invented by the government as a pretext for killing Liberals" (Márquez 1970; 359). The proprietress and

some people older than she would repudiate the myth of the workers hemmed in at the station and the train with two hundred cars loaded with dead people, and they would even insist that, after all, everything had been set forth in judicial documents and in primary-school textbooks: that the banana company had never existed.

(Márquez 1970; 359)

The magical outlook held by Úrsula and many of the Macondites is a kind of mirror-image of José's ultra-realism in that the (by realist standards) fantastical is accepted as perfectly normal, and "real" events such as the massacre of the workers is regarded as too fantastical to be true.

Ultimately, Úrsula's totem-regime is structured, immobile, fixed. It gives to the Buendías a power to endure, but not to develop or adapt. It represents the conservative, stunting potential of magic which, among much else, doomed the Aztecs to succumb to the Spanish. An analogy for this conservatism, this lack of curiosity, is Úrsula's response to one of the psychic acts of

the Segundo twins: "'[t]hat's what they're all like,' she said without surprise, 'crazy from birth'" (Márquez 1970; 172). This fatalism cannot withstand the shocks of contact with a foreign capitalism in league with a neo-colonialist Colombian government.

The advent of the Banana Company and the attempts of the Colombian workers to negotiate fairer working conditions were the precursors to the strike and the massacre--"the events that would deal Macondo its fatal blow" (Márquez 1970; 271). While the world is marching onward, and indeed the novel recounts a linear account of the development and decline of the Buendías and Macondo, Úrsula persists in the delusion that "[i]t's as if the world were repeating itself" (Márquez 1970; 275). During the deluge which swept so much of the old world away, Úrsula "gradually [lost] her sense of reality and [confused] present time with remote periods in her life to the point where, on one occasion, she spent three days weeping deeply over the death of Petronila Iguarán, her great-grandmother, buried for over a century" (Márquez 1970; 303).

Fernanda del Carpio, who takes over control of the house from the aging Úrsula, similarly persists--influenced by the heartless formalism of her once aristocratic Spanish and *cachacostian* (3) background and her rigid notion of Catholicism--in trying to impose her regime on the Buendía household and deny the passage of time and the accidents of history: for instance, she wanted to "drown [Meme's son Aureliano] in the bathroom cistern" (Márquez 1970; 277).

Thus the magical beliefs and traditions of the characters in the

novel contribute in large measure to the decay and fall of Macondo. The central example of this in the novel is Úrsula's incest taboo: in her family lore it is recounted that "[a]n aunt of Úrsula's, married to an uncle of José Arcadio Buendía, had a son who went through life wearing loose, baggy trousers... for he had been born and had grown up with a cartilaginous tail in the shape of a corkscrew" (Márquez 1972; 24). Her attempts to prevent such a disaster befalling her own progeny leads to the frustration of all of the deepest desires of the Buendías and culminates in the birth (to Amaranta Úrsula, by her nephew Aureliano) of a child (named Aureliano) who has the tail of a pig. However, this pessimism and judgement of the magical (which, after all, Márquez claims is intrinsically Latin American), is counterbalanced by the vigour and inventiveness of the telling of the tale and the psychological richness this affords the reader.

Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children (1982) shares many affinities with One Hundred Years of Solitude. The novel traces the genealogy and personal history of its narrator Saleem, whose life experiences are also an analogy for the history of (mostly) post-Independence India. Answering the criticism that Midnight's Children is a terribly pessimistic novel, ending as it does with the fragmentation of its narrator, Rushdie claims that

I tried quite deliberately to make the form of the book a kind of opposite to what the narrative was saying. What I mean is that the optimism of the book seems to me to lie in its "multitudinous" structure. It's designed to show a country or a society with an almost endless capacity for generating stories, events, new ideas, and constantly renewing, rebuilding itself. In the middle of that you have one rather tragic life. The two have to be

seen together. (Rushdie, Kunapipi, 23, "Interview")

I think this is a useful analogy for what Márquez achieves in One Hundred Years of Solitude.

Parallel to Melquíades' fatalistic pre-recorded history of Macondo runs Márquez's humorous, probing, and censorial account. For Aureliano, who spends his time trying to decipher Melquíades' manuscripts, the "stormy sessions" which he becomes involved in with the "four arguers, whose names were Alvaro, German, Alfonso, and Gabriel" (Márquez 1972; 357) and which

began at the [old Catalan's] bookstore and ended at dawn in the brothels were a revelation. It had never occurred to him until then to think that literature was the best plaything that had ever been invented to make fun of people, as Alvaro demonstrated during one night of revels. Some time would have to pass before Aureliano realized that such arbitrary attitudes had their origins in the example of the wise Catalonian, for whom wisdom was worth nothing if it could not be used to invent a new way of preparing chick peas. (Márquez 1972; 357)

In parallel with the prophetic magical history of Melquíades we are given the Enlightenment perspective of Gabriel Márquez.

Here lies the contradiction at the heart of Márquez's project in One Hundred Years of Solitude. He has examined the consequences of the magical world-view of his Latin American characters in an analytical way and found them to be detrimental on a historical plane. In his novel this world-view contributes to a fatal breakdown of ethical, epistemological and genealogical distinctions and a consequent inability to act with conviction or adapt to the fast-changing Latin American historical reality. It is thus demonstrably a defective mode of interpreting the world. Yet, he simultaneously wants to claim that the magical has a substantive

value, that it is an integral part of Latin American reality, and, moreover affords us a sense of reality which is greater than that usually offered by plain realists (or Stalinists).

In One Hundred Years of Solitude Márquez ultimately shows the decay and collapse of the magical world. The book concludes with the final destruction of Macondo as Aureliano reads the self-determining and pre-destined fate of the town and the Buendía line in the manuscripts of Melquíades. This whole self-sustaining and self-constrained magical world has collapsed in upon itself, and the town is aptly swept away by the symbolically circular destructive power of a hurricane. As we have seen, Carpentier also ended his The Kingdom of this World with a hurricane. Perhaps in Márquez's case it also symbolizes an elemental force (and Márquez does claim there is a magical dimension to Latin America) which, like Márquez's magic realist novel, sweeps away the residue of the incestuous and ultimately self-consuming patterns inhabited by the Buendías--clearing a space for a fresh beginning, a re-imagining of Colombian/Latin American realities and identities.

Interestingly, in the sacred traditions of the Mayan Indians supernatural forces and entities travelled between the dimensions of the universe by means of whirling spirals called "malinallis" (Carrasco 1990; 52). In the light of this, the Hurricane which brings the novel to a close can be interpreted to have a positive political meaning--restoring the prior claims of the indigenous inhabitants (and perhaps including those who consider themselves truly Latin Americans?) after the long subjugation under the

Spanish conquerors and settlers (4).

In any event, Márquez has passed judgement on the fantastical, showing in the case of José Arcadio Buendía the delusions and madness it may lead to, distinguishing it from the magical, and arguing that the pursuit of rationalist enterprises may just as easily lead one into the delusions of fancy as may the pursuit of magic. As we have seen in the case of the "hermeneutical delirium" wrought by the banana company's lawyers in the dispute over better working conditions for the company's workers, Márquez disputes the claims of an exclusive realism to an adequate and objective account of reality. The danger of dealing with human issues by means of abstract rationalisations (after all reason cannot itself ultimately prove the existence of a substantive reality) is tragically demonstrated in the massacre of workers striking (making their point through their physical presence at an agreed destination) because their attempts at negotiating (through words, language) have ended only in the company's lawyers having argued that the "company did not have, never had, and never would have any workers in its service because they were all hired on a temporary and occasional basis" (Márquez 1970; 279).

By the end of One Hundred Years of Solitude the methods of explaining Latin American reality, the magical cosmologies of the indigenous peoples, the fantastical allusions to the epics and romances by the first explorers, the scientific discourses of travelling naturalists and anthropologists (seized upon both by Latin American nation-builders and foreign exploiters), seem to

have suffered an analogous fate to the gutted Spanish galleon becalmed first in the jungle, and later in poppy fields. They have been revealed to be relics, structures which no longer (or never could) fit the reality which Márquez saw about him.

It is as if the novel were intended to bring this confusion of unresolved discourses, the hodge-podge of superstition, tradition, rationality and magic by which the inhabitants of Macondo come to live their lives, into a coherent relation to one another. They are identified, placed historically, scrutinized, and cross-referenced, and in this process their flaws and exclusions are revealed. This process does not lead to an abandonment of the histories they recount, but rather a conscious awareness of them which constitutes a kind of liberation akin to that of Gabriel Márquez who leaves Macondo/Colombia for Paris, escaping its destruction and destructiveness and able to write its history.

But does Márquez offer something new, a more integrated and holistic vision of Latin American reality in One Hundred Years of Solitude? I would argue not. What Márquez offers is a broader interpretation of the possibilities, a more inclusive arena for the articulation of the many conflicting discourses of Latin American reality and the politics of their interrelationships. In his interview with Márquez, Mendoza comments that "I have the feeling your European readers are usually aware of the magic in your stories but fail to see the reality behind it..." (Mendoza/ Márquez 1983; 35). Márquez replies that "[t]his is surely because their rationalism prevents them seeing that reality isn't limited to the

price of tomatoes and eggs. Everyday life in Latin America proves that reality is full of the most extraordinary things" (Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 35). Márquez attributes this perception to having grown up with his grandmother, whose stories acknowledged the marvellous reality of the Caribbean, a melting pot of European, Indian and African influences. He tells Mendoza that

[t]he Caribbean taught me to look at reality in a different way, to accept the supernatural as part of our everyday life. The Caribbean is a distinctive world whose first work of magical literature was The Diary of Christopher Columbus, a book which tells of fabulous plants and mythological societies. The history of the Caribbean is full of magic--a magic brought by black slaves from Africa but also by Swedish, Dutch and English pirates... (Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 52)

He comments that his earlier books such as Nobody Writes to the Colonel (1958), In Evil Hour, and Big Mama's Funeral (both published in 1962) "all reflect the reality of life in Colombia and this theme determines the rational structure of the books. I don't regret having written them, but they belong to a kind of premeditated literature that offers too static and exclusive a vision of reality" (Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 56). Mendoza remarks that Márquez "finds Cartesian thinking as uncomfortable as a tight waistcoat...he finds the logic with which every Frenchman is imbued from the cradle extremely limiting. He sees it as a mould in which there is only room for one side of reality" (Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 95).

Carpentier believed that to understand and to write the magical dimension of Latin American life one had to "believe" in it, indeed that such faith was part of the identity of a "true" Latin American. However, this was in many ways an intellectual convic-

tion, and in The Kingdom of this World he is an honest enough writer not to conceal his difficulties with adopting such a faith. For Márquez, the belief that there is a magical dimension to reality, and especially Latin American reality, is far more natural (pre-dating any intellectual "conversion" such as that awakened in Carpentier by the *Indigenista* movement in Cuba, his contact with the Surrealists and his subsequent visits to Haiti). In a sense, then, Márquez is able to be more critical of the magical dimensions to Latin Americans' interpretations of the world as he assumes its existence and is not trying to prove it or discover it for himself.

In a sense One Hundred Years of Solitude is a limit text of magic realism. Latin American magic realism arose as a means of expressing a uniquely Latin American reality. It was a means of protest, formally and otherwise. It cannibalized European elements, was intended to devour what was good and/or useful and excrete the rest. It based its Otherness on a substantive magical dimension to Latin American reality which had been "recognised" in literature from the very beginning. Magic realism was intended to express the marvellous nature of Latin American reality, and appropriate and/or contradict the self-serving fantasies of Europeans about Latin America. In this respect, one can understand why Márquez has been at such pains to assert, as he has done so often in interviews, that "[t]here's not a single line in my novels which is not based on reality" (Mendoza/Márquez 1983; 36).

However, in One Hundred Years of Solitude Márquez both celebrates and attacks those belief-systems based on a belief in a

substantive magical dimension to reality. At the end of the novel it is the magical world which is destroyed, and the world of Gabriel Márquez which survives. On the whole, In One Hundred Years of Solitude magic is presented as a means for exploring areas of human experience neglected by exclusive rationalist discourses on history and individual experience rather than as a substantive realm unique to Latin American reality.

I think Márquez's much-publicized superstitions--for instance his belief that yellow flowers protect him from harm and positively influence his writing--reflect interestingly on his dilemma. He does not believe in God, a divine agency who guides or can influence history. He is a socialist who believes that change can only come about through human agency. The magic realism of One Hundred Years of Solitude comes bearing truths of history, condemning (and yet also celebrating) the ahistorical nature of the magical outlook of many of its characters. Yet Márquez must preserve an element of the substantive element of the magical, because it is on this that his identity as a Latin American novelist is predicated.

He entertains certain superstitions and thereby manages to sustain a belief in a substantive magical dimension to Latin American reality without systemizing it. By preserving a substantive element to the magical and by cultivating his image as a seer and something of a visionary (see the chapter entitled "Superstitions, Manias and Tastes" in The Fragrance of Guava (1983, pp.111-117)), Márquez attempts to escape the sort of relativism which this

resistance (both to the straight-jacket of Enlightenment rationalism and its literary avatar European realism, and to what may be considered the negative aspects of magic) to any form of "Stalinist" hegemony might otherwise entail.

In conclusion it can be seen that in One Hundred Years of Solitude Márquez's magic realism has to balance, with no hope of resolving, two fundamentally opposed views of the role of magic in Latin American reality. Gabriel Márquez's and Melquíades' accounts of the history of Macondo have not merged at the end of the novel. However, Latin American reality is not, of course, resolvable; it cannot be contained or mastered by any one discourse. The achievement of Márquez's magic realism is to have provided a mode which could embrace the continent's heterogeneity without lapsing into paternalism or relativism. In Márquez's case it is also a mode which embodies the unresolved contradictions of a society in which a man can be a "superstitious" communist. This makes for a peculiarly South American socialism--a Third World socialism if you like--as opposed to the rationalism of the First World version. This vision entails a humanization, a "re-enchantment" of socialism and of socialist realism, its literary avatar in Latin America.

One Hundred Years of Solitude was an epochal achievement, a moment in which Latin Americans could see the many discourses which told their histories embraced within a single narrative/imaginative design. In its very comprehensiveness One Hundred Years of Solitude was simultaneously the apogee of Latin Americanism, and an agent of its deconstruction. The novel represents a moment when Latin

Americans could see themselves in their entirety, and not just in relation to European realism or local Indigenisms. As the literary critic Gerald Martin puts it, "[o]nce the characters become able to interpret their own past, the author is able to end on an optimistic note. The apocalypse of the Buendias is not--how could it be? --the end of Latin America but the end of the neocolonialism and its conscious or unconscious collaborators" (Martin 1987; 111).

One Hundred Years of Solitude is a limit text of modernism: it both seeks the origins of Colombian/Latin American society and wants to sweep them aside; it at once asserts the danger of fantasy and the fickleness of reason, and also undermines the substantive basis for such judgements in its even-handed critique of the magical. It is a limit text for magic realism in that Márquez teeters not only between magic and realism, but between two types of realism.

On the one hand, the magical dimension to magic realism becomes something closer to the Enlightenment's notion of reason--a procedure for the pursuit of truth which does not require (nor tolerate) unchallengeable substantive and privileged sources of authority to establish its validity. It is from this position that Márquez launches his critique of conservative elements in indigenous and imported magical traditions. On the other, these traditions provide the imaginative space for explorations of the human psyche and its entanglements with history which an Enlightenment rationalism cannot encompass.

Márquez sees the magical as a means for apprehending reality in

a more holistic sense--with its acknowledgement and nurturing of the imaginative needs of the human psyche. He also sees the magical as a substantive realm which in some sense defines and makes possible some sort of cohesive "Latin American reality" (and differentiates it from European reality), hence providing a concrete foundation for a Latin American identity. Like Carpentier, he seems to be ultimately unconvinced of the historical importance of any such substantive magical dimension to Latin American reality, but he nevertheless cannot deny its reality on a psychological plane, in the minds of many Latin Americans (like himself).

Thus his magic realism crystallises the dilemma of the Third World writer, trying to articulate a society which embraces what Rushdie has referred to as "the impossibly old" and the "appallingly new" (Rushdie 1991; 302). Seen in this light the dilemmas Márquez faced in writing One Hundred Years of Solitude are definitive of Latin American reality. Thus, after all, he may be said to have given us a vision of that reality--a vision which acknowledges but ultimately cannot satisfy (all) humanity's desire for a holistic vision of a harmonious world.

CHAPTER FIVE

I have already examined two moments in magic realism. Before entering into a detailed discussion of Salman Rushdie's use of magic realism in The Satanic Verses (1988), it is necessary to briefly place these three moments in relation to one another. Carpentier formulated his version of magic realism in the context of his need to define himself as a Latin American. His search for identity took the form of an identification with what he regarded as primal elements in Latin American culture, and a rejection of European rationalism. His quest was undertaken in a period in which his native Cuba was occupied by U.S. forces (1), and suffered the repressive Cuban regime of Gerardo Machado (1924-1933).

It was a time in which the world (at least for most Europeans) seemed to be an increasingly fragmented place. Even the unity of the self was under fire. For some, many of the Surrealists among them, the only remaining redoubt of certainty became the self, and not the socially-constructed, everyday self, but something deeper. The Surrealists sought to plumb these depths through techniques like automatic writing, hoping to explode the borders between conscious and unconscious selves, between that material and spiritual selfhood which had been kept separate, in their view, by Enlightenment rationalism. They did not intend to discard the legacy of the European realist tradition, but rather to expand it.

However, for Carpentier, influenced by Spengler's Decline of the West (1918), the Surrealists' interest in subjective fantasy was a

symptom of the growing paralysis of the self-reflexive civilization of Europe. Latin America, on the other hand, he believed to be a historically ascendent culture, where the magical had always been a part of everyday life, never exiled as in Europe. Thus a Latin American author should seek out and draw upon this vital source which permeated a whole continent, this magical element which refused to be pinned down by the taxidermists of Enlightenment knowledge and its attendant political motivations. Whilst Surrealism, Carpentier increasingly believed, had a tendency to lose touch with reality and to regress into solipsistic self-exploration, he could claim that magic realism offered a holistic and vital interpretation of Latin American reality without retreating into cul-de-sacs of the above sort.

In Carpentier's The Kingdom of this World (1949), as we have seen, the magical element of his magic realism is used to oppose, to thumb its nose at, as well as de-construct and reassemble in new ways the European accounts of Haitian history. It is primarily an oppositional discourse. The kind of universalism which underlay Surrealism (the pursuit of basic truths about human nature beneath the fabrications of culture and society) was transformed in Carpentier's work into a Latin American universalism (a kind of pan-Latin-Americanism) which did not entail, he hoped, too much of the self-reflexiveness he believed had crippled Europe.

Eighteen years after the first publication of The Kingdom of this World, in an entirely different moment in Latin American history, Márquez had his One Hundred Years of Solitude (1967)

published. He had written, in a kind of exile, about a country (and a continent) torn by violence and civil wars. His magic realism, like Carpentier's, was in good part directed at the cultural legacy, the imaginative legacy of colonialism. But at this later moment it is also directed at those groups within Latin American societies which have imbibed this legacy of exploitation and intolerance and practice it in their own right.

Márquez is less concerned than Carpentier was to define a Latin American identity against a European one, and he has understood that the special nature of Latin America lies in the heterogeneity of its peoples and cultures. As Brennan relates, "the heterogeneity of race, ethnicity and politics, which had always been the shameful symbol of a muddled national identity (what Vargas Llosa called cultural "fragmentation" and cultural "poverty") later became for him and other of the Latin American "new novelists" of the early 1960s a mark of cultural vitality" (Brennan 1989; 59).

It was less important for Márquez to validate the magical as opposed to the "realism" of the Enlightenment. Rather, the historical moment seemed to require of him an effort to distinguish between the magical as the mode (or an aspect thereof) which Latin Americans made use of in interpreting the world, and the fantasy of a writer or a dreamer like José Arcadio Buendía. For instance, the founding myths of many Latin American nations were fantasies which had little to do with the demographic and historical realities of the communities they were invented to establish, and whose attempts

to establish homogeneous national communities were harmful in their exclusivity. The very structure of One Hundred Years of Solitude resists the sort of imposition of an exclusive master-narrative attempted by these early literary nation-builders. The historical moment also appeared to demand a critique of the magical aspect of many Latin Americans' world-views, as they contained negative tendencies such as a political fatalism and a certain credulity which had paved the way to power for the continent's many populist dictators.

In his Nobel Prize address García Márquez referred to the literary influence on his work of the Italian explorer Antonio Pigafetta. He spoke admiringly of the Italian's Voyage to the New World (1555), "a meticulous log on his journey through our Southern American continent which, nevertheless, also seems to be an adventure into the imagination" (Márquez 1982; 207). As Brennan points out, this admiration is both sincere and backhanded:

[t]he conventional problematics of 'truth' and 'fiction' are here expressed in an imperial context by a Third-World author whose acknowledged debt to his former masters is a lesson in how to lie appealingly. His fiction is their 'news'. And by implication--if the irony is taken far enough--his novels have a greater claim to truth than their non-fiction, for their fantasies are the result of the strangeness of a world to which they are alien, while his reports to the metropolis are authoritative because native. (Brennan 1989; 67)

Márquez is left wanting to claim the authority of his fantasies by claiming that his magical realism offers a better and more comprehensive (and hence more realistic) way of representing Latin American reality. His claims presuppose a substantive magical element to Latin American reality, a common and distinguishing

thread which could not be contained by a European realism alone. However, the implicit argument in One Hundred Years of Solitude is that this belief in the magical has had (amongst other things) a crippling effect on the ability of Latin American peoples to adapt to their changing world and resist the onslaught of persisting economic colonialism and neo-colonialism practiced by indigenous governments using the means employed by their former imperial masters.

Magic realism, in Márquez's hands, thus becomes an aesthetic strategy which can contain (but not resolve) the opposing discourses of the magical and of Enlightenment realism, revealing both the fantastical and motivated nature of much realism, and criticizing the potential fatalism and inflexibility of magical traditions at the same time. Indeed, as Carlos Fuentes has written,

the novel is born from the very fact that we do not understand one another, because unitary, orthodox language has broken down. Quixote and Sancho, the Shandy brothers, Mr and Mrs Karenin: their novels are the comedy (or the drama) of their misunderstandings. Impose a unitary language: you kill the novel, but you also kill the society.
(in Rushdie 1991, 420)

Márquez's magic realism entails the recognition that "unitary, orthodox language has broken down" (or certainly has not existed in South and Central America since the first moments of Spanish colonialism there). This does not mean, for Márquez, that there is not a "Latin American reality" which still requires to be depicted. One Hundred Years of Solitude can be read as both a critique and a celebration of some of the ways of interpreting this reality inherited by Latin Americans. While the novel registers the strain

of containing both Melquíades's and Gabriel Márquez's visions of Colombian/Latin American reality, it does not explode into a mass of disparate but overlapping realities. In this sense, Williamson is justified in talking about Márquez's work as modernist.

The picture, however, alters considerably when we turn to Salman Rushdie. For Rushdie, writing in the cosmopolitan city of London in the nineteen-eighties, any sense of a supra-national, continental identity has disappeared. He himself has stated that, in his view, he inhabits a "postmodern world" (Rushdie 1991; 422). One might, broadly speaking, characterise the shift from Carpentier's to Márquez's to Rushdie's magic realism as that from primarily epistemological concerns to primarily ontological ones. Brian McHale (1987) discerns in postmodern fiction "a shift from the kind of perspectivism that allowed the modernist to get a better bearing on the meaning of a complex but nevertheless singular reality, to the foregrounding of questions as to how radically different realities may coexist, collide, and interpenetrate" (Harvey 1990; 41).

Prior to entering into a discussion of Rushdie's magic realism, however, it is necessary to examine his links to this aesthetic strategy in its Latin American form. Timothy Brennan points out in his Salman Rushdie and the Third World (1989) that Rushdie served his apprenticeship as a novelist in the time of the

rise of the Latin American 'new novel', whose influence and authority--particularly, of course, that of García Márquez--suggested what his more recent political memoir, The Jaguar Smile: a Nicaraguan Journey [1987] finally proves: his search for reference points within the Latin American decolonisation...and the ironies implicit in his

personal yoking-together of the two Indies, East and West... (Brennan 1989; 61-62)

James Harrison is surely also correct when he argues in his Salman Rushdie (1992) that while Rushdie's Indian background may have led him to use magic realism to "accommodate the incongruities of his fictional world" in a "distinctively Hindu" way, by having been educated in England and writing novels in English after settling there he "gained the whole world but lost his Indian soul" (Harrison 1992; 57). Thus, in Harrison's view, "his use of magic realism and other self-conscious devices of contemporary fiction is likely to be less the spontaneous outgrowth of his Indian roots than the product of European and South American influences and to be correspondingly satiric in intent" (Harrison 1992; 57).

Brennan demonstrates the direct influence of Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude on Rushdie's novels Midnight's Children (1982) and Shame (1984), without however suggesting that either of these novels is derivative of the Latin American's (see Brennan 1989; 66). He argues that "what Rushdie borrows from Márquez" is that "he theorises his own use of fantasy, and does so by referring to colonialism" (Brennan 1989; 66). In the same way that Márquez subverts the writing of the European explorers and conquerors of Latin America, Rushdie sets about turning around European labels and forms. He writes in The Satanic Verses that "[t]o turn insults into strengths, whigs, Tories, Blacks all chose to wear with pride the names they were given in scorn; likewise, our mountain-climbing, prophet-motivated solitary is to be the medieval baby-frightener, the Devil's synonym: Mahound" (Rushdie 1988; 93). In

that same novel, Chamcha's erstwhile friend and the lover of his wife, Jumpy Joshi, closet poet, makes use of Enoch Powell's line "Like the Roman...I seem to see the river Tiber foaming with much blood. Reclaim the metaphor, Jumpy Joshi had told himself. Turn it; make it a thing we can use" (Rushdie 1988; 186). Of course the ultimate dramatisation of this strategy in the novel comes in the form of the "black" community of London's adoption of the sulphurous cloven-hoofed devil which Chamcha becomes as a symbol of their defiance in the face of racial discrimination.

In contrast to Carpentier and Márquez, Rushdie claims that his is a migrant's vision, that in his case "the problem is that I come from too many places...suffer excess rather than absence" (in Brennan 1989; 60). In The Satanic Verses Otto Cone, also a migrant, describes the world as he has experienced it. It is a description which fits most postmodern descriptions of contemporary reality: "[a]nybody ever tries to tell you how this most beautiful and most evil of planets is somehow homogeneous, composed only of reconcilable elements, that it all *adds up*, you get on the phone to the straitjacket tailor" he tells his daughter Alleluia (Rushdie 1988; 295). "The world is incompatible," he continues, "just never forget it: gaga. Ghosts, Nazis, saints, all alive at the same time; in one spot, blissful happiness, while down the road, the inferno. You can't ask for a wilder place" (Rushdie 1988; 295).

Rushdie lives in a world where many (and he among them, at least when he wrote his Herbert Read Memorial Lecture for 1990 entitled "Is Nothing Sacred?") believe that god is dead. Yet, he recognises

that "in other parts [other than the secular west, one presumes he means], for example India, God continues to flourish, in literally thousands of forms" (Rushdie 1991; 417). He argues that "one reason for my attempt to develop a form of fiction in which the miraculous might coexist with the mundane was precisely my acceptance that notions of the sacred and the profane both needed to be explored, as far as possible without pre-judgement, in any honest literary portrait of the way we are" (Rushdie 1991; 417). What Rushdie appears not to have fully grasped is that it is no longer possible to speak easily about "other parts". This is curious in the light of the insight he expresses in the speech he gives Otto Cone (cited above). In the wake of the furore raised by the publication of The Satanic Verses it is clear that he miscalculated the explosive political potential of a postmodern space comprising a complex of conflicting discourses about reality.

We must further bear in mind that Rushdie, despite his cosmopolitanism, considers himself just as much (or as little?) an Indian as an Englishman, and is much interested and involved in the literatures and politics of Third World nations (for instance Nicaragua). In the light of this concern (well summed up in his slogan "the empire writes back"--used by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin for the title of their book on "Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures" (1989)), and the postmodernist world-view Rushdie espouses, Latin American magic realism would seem to offer a useful aesthetic basis for his project. In a review of Márquez's Chronicle of a Death Foretold (1982) written in 1982, Rushdie

writes that

El realismo magico magical realism, at least as practiced by Márquez, is a development out of surrealism that expresses a genuinely 'Third World' consciousness. It deals with what Naipaul has called 'half-made' societies, in which the impossibly old struggles against the appallingly new... It would be a mistake to think of Márquez's literary universe as an invented, self-referential, closed system. He is not writing about Middle-earth, but about the one we all inhabit. Macondo exists. That is its magic. (Rushdie 1991; 302)

In Rushdie's vision magic realism would seem to provide an aesthetic mode capable of incorporating the many disparate discourses which co-inhabit what he regards as the postmodern world and the "Third World" specifically. He does not aspire to a kind of holism in the way that Carpentier and Márquez did, rather a form of inclusivity. He does not believe in God, yet through magic realism hopes to be able to represent those who do and take their faith and the questions it poses for the contemporary world seriously.

Of course, as we have seen, the magic dimension of magic realism (in general) does not just amount to a series of religious discourses about the world. It also signifies an excess, a belief that there is much about everyday reality which cannot be contained in the discourse of reason and the Enlightenment aesthetic of realism. However, for Rushdie much of this "magical" dimension is grounded in or subject to psychological explanations rather than in any substantive magical dimension of reality. Particular cultures have idiosyncratic ways of expressing their imaginative needs, and thus their adherents experience and deal with (or fail to deal with) certain psychological traumas in particular ways. It is

perhaps on this level that Rushdie can find--not shared substantive communities-- but interpretative communities. His fantasy is grounded in reality through its engagement with these styles of interpretation, and not through claiming access to a universal undercurrent of the magical underpinning human cultures or a substantive magical dimension peculiar to a certain part of the world. In his Herbert Read Memorial Lecture (1990) Rushdie also writes that "Art, too, is an event in history, subject to the historical process. But it is also *about* that process, and must constantly strive to find new forms to mirror an endlessly renewed world" (Rushdie 1991; 418).

I have used the word fantasy above in a sense which may appear ambiguous in the light of my previous careful distinctions between the fantastical and the magical. I do this deliberately to highlight how Rushdie's position differs from those of Carpentier and Márquez. The magical as part of Rushdie's aesthetic strategy appears to perform certain interpretative and critical functions. It does not claim to represent a substantive reality in any fundamental way--as the magic realism of Carpentier and to a lesser extent Márquez did. That is to say, its concerns are primarily hermeneutical.

As such Rushdie's magic realism, in dealing with historical reality, is vulnerable to the charge that it amounts to nothing more than fantasy, that the author is merely aestheticizing the reality he claims to be interpreting. It has been argued (as I have shown in Chapter Four) that the most obvious reason for the

popularity of Latin American magic realism in the West is due to the escapism it offers to the frustrated and perhaps overly confined European imagination of the twentieth-century. Not surprisingly, therefore, we will find that Rushdie, like Márquez, is concerned to judge what he considers to be unprincipled and escapist uses of fantasy. This does not mean, however, that either of these writers ignore the needs of the human imagination. Their works quite consciously afford a kind of imaginative *largesse* long since outlawed in the European context (with the exception of a few notable cases like Günther Grass, perhaps).

Interestingly, near the beginning of The Satanic Verses, Rushdie moves the narrative to (at least in the mind of Rosa Diamond) Latin America in order to establish a distinction between what he regards to be ethical and unethical uses of fantasy, and to pass judgement, by extension, on the dangers of an unprincipled magic realism. As we have seen, Márquez appears to make a critical reference to Borges's magic realism in using a Borgesian passage to demonstrate José Arcadio Buendía's descent into madness and the rootless delirium of fantasy. Rushdie takes us to Argentina (Borges's native land) in a similarly Borgesian episode which culminates with Rosa Diamond on her death-bed contemplating different climaxes to her (real? imagined?) affair with Martín de la Cruz.

Rosa suffers in her relationship with "poor prosaic Henry" (Rushdie 1988; 146) Diamond because the man is so unimaginative. The couple's neighbour on their Argentinian *estancia* is Doctor Jorge Babington (Jorge is also Borges's first name). He tells Rosa "tales

of the British in South America, always such gay blades... spies brigands and looters. *Are you such exotics in your cold England? ..senora, I don't think so. Crammed into that coffin of an island, you must find wider horizons to express these secret selves* [author's emphasis]" (Rushdie 1988; 146). She finds them in the songs of the stars and her lust for Martín de la Cruz.

In the novel it remains highly ambiguous as to whether Rosa ever had the courage to do anything about her frustrated longings, however. Eventually, de la Cruz was murdered, and Rosa has not the courage to resolve or admit (even after all these years) who killed him. Gibreel Farishta--who as part of his new archangelic identity has been given the dubious gift of realizing people's visions for them--is in some way facilitating Rosa's final delirious fantasies. Even for him, however, "it was not possible to distinguish memory from wishes, or guilty reconstructions from confessional truths,-- because even on her deathbed Rosa Diamond *did not know how to look her history in the eye* [my emphasis]" (Rushdie 1988; 153).

How, then, is Rushdie using magic realism in The Satanic Verses? The answer cannot be a simple one, if only for the reason that this mode is used in a number of different contexts. It is useful to begin with some comments on the structure of the novel. The Satanic Verses comprises nine chapters, alternating reality (in the sense which we normally understand it) with the dream-realities. The first thing to notice is that the more fantastical things seem to occur in the chapters dealing with the "real" world.

The novel begins in true magic realist fashion with an extremely unlikely event described in great naturalistic ("realistic") detail: "two real, full-grown, living men fell from a great height, twenty-nine thousand and two feet, towards the English Channel, without the benefit of parachutes or wings, out of a clear sky" (Rushdie 1988; 3). The jumbo jet Bostan has been blown apart (by a bomb, we later learn), spewing "reclining seats, stereophonic headsets, drinks trolleys, motion discomfort receptacles, disembarkation cards, duty-free video games, braided caps, paper cups, blankets, oxygen masks" (Rushdie 1988; 4) into the atmosphere. However, "[a]lso--for there had been more than a few migrants aboard...--mingling with the remnants of the plane, equally fragmented, equally absurd, there floated the debris of the soul, broken memories, sloughed-off selves, severed mother-tongues, violated privacies, untranslatable jokes, extinguished futures, lost loves, the forgotten meaning of hollow, booming words, *land, belonging, home*" (Rushdie 1988; 4).

Rushdie manages the shift from falling physical objects to the "debris of the soul" smoothly, emphasising that they are equally "real" and treating them as such. In an analogous way, during the insomnia plague in Macondo people begin to see the ghosts of one another's dreams wandering amongst them, as they in fact normally do in the personages who are dreaming them. Although the Macondites regain their memories and lose their capacity to see one another's dreams (and perhaps this is a failure in some way?), these dream-figures persist in influencing their individual lives and their

interaction with others (one of the José Arcadios flees half way around the world to escape the image of his aunt--in vain). These repressed qualities begin to emerge, depicted through magic realist incidents, in the "real" world, for instance Remedios's otherworldliness culminates in her ascension to heaven one afternoon (Márquez 1972; 221).

There is a good deal of this psychologism in Rushdie's use of magic realism. However, the point that needs to be stressed here is a crucial one of difference. Rushdie or the narrator (and it is intentionally ambiguous as to whether he is god/Gibreel or Shaitan, or both) intrudes into the text. The authorial reticence which we have seen characterizing much of the magic realism of Carpentier and Márquez is put aside in this postmodernist moment of magic realism. "Let's face it" says Rushdie's narrator in Chapter One, "it was impossible for them [the two falling men, Gibreel Farishta and Saladin Chamcha] to have heard one another, much less conversed and also competed thus in song. Accelerating towards the planet, atmosphere roaring around them, how could they ? But let's face this, too; they did" (Rushdie 1988; 6).

If Márquez's magic realism could be self-reflexive in criticizing the discourses of the magical and the real used by Latin Americans, and showing how these discourses in their extreme forms lead to madness, murder and decay, Rushdie goes one step further and puts his own use of magic realism in question in his novel. This is arguably another way of getting around the claim that his magic realism amounts to mere fantasy and escapism. Where at times

the reader of One Hundred Years of Solitude can only succumb to the judgements on history made by the omniscient third-person narrator (for there are times when Márquez's personal political convictions quite clearly intervene in his presentation of historical episodes, in particular the massacre of United Fruit Company workers), Rushdie himself enters the text as author and god of his fictional universe. In these episodes it is profoundly ambiguous, as we shall see, as to whether his opinions and fictions are to be trusted.

Rushdie explicitly calls attention to his use of fantasy, leaving his readers in no doubt that he has control of his narrative reality and that he is therefore responsible for it. By entering the text in his role as author/God of the text he also exposes himself as a narrator who is only omniscient about the textual world he has created and not the real world and the aspects of it which concern him in this text. However, what is also very clear is that his use of fantasy is directed, theorised, and not guided merely by whimsy.

Indeed, shortly after this (authorial?) intrusion, Farishta and Chamcha embrace "head-to-tail, and the force of their collision sent them tumbling end over end, performing their geminate cartwheels all the way down and along the hole that went to Wonderland; while pushing their way out of the white came a succession of cloudforms, ceaselessly metamorphosing" (Rushdie 1988; 6).. This short passage prefigures the central themes and development of this book: the self-centred irresponsible Farishta turns into an apparition of an angel and the respectable and

responsible Chamcha into the very devil, and both of their subsequent fates will occasion a meditation on the potential (enforced and otherwise) mutations of human beings, on the propensity for good and for evil in all of us. Before we can identify the narrator of this first section of Chapter One with a moral author-figure, however, we are confronted with the following passage on the final page of this chapter:

I know the truth, obviously. I watched the whole thing. As to omnipresence and -potence, I'm making no claims at present, but I can manage this much, I hope. Chamcha willed it and Farishta did what was willed.

Which was the miracle worker ?

Of what type--angelic, satanic--was Farishta's song ?

Who am I ?

Let's put it this way: who has the best tunes?

(Rushdie 1988; 10)

Skipping Chapter Two, for now, (in which Gibreel is transported in his dreams to the imaginary city of Jahilia which is a re-imagined Mecca), I wish to move to an examination of Chapter Three--which finds Gibreel and Saladin back in contemporary England (in "reality"). Chapter Three of The Satanic Verses contains one of the most powerful and effective uses of magic realism in the novel. Arrested by the police, Chamcha begins to sprout "two new, goatly, unarguable horns" (Rushdie 1988; 141). As he is being led out of the house, he catches sight of Gibreel Farishta on the stairway, and appeals for help. Alerted to his presence, the police appear to be about to pounce on Farishta, but

at that moment the floodlights were switched off...and in the aftermath of the seven suns it became clear to everyone there that a pale, golden light was emanating from the direction of the man in the smoking jacket [Farishta], was in fact streaming softly outwards from a

point immediately behind his head. Inspector Lime never referred to that light again, and if he had been asked about it would have denied ever having seen such a thing, a halo, in the late twentieth century, pull the other one. (Rushdie 1988; 141-142)

However, when Gibreel asks what the policemen want, they are all overcome with the desire to answer his question in great detail, "to reveal their secrets, as if he were, as if, but no, ridiculous, they would shake their heads for weeks, until they had all persuaded themselves that they had done as they did for purely logical reasons..." (Rushdie 1988; 142). In Carpentier's work, although events are given a very different interpretation to that given them by the rationalist discourse of European settlers and historians, the European characters in the novel never experience a magical event. M. Lenormand de Mézy becomes aware of the existence of Vodou as a powerful force for resistance and subversion amongst his originally African labour force, but he does not experience events which he cannot explain through rational means, given the necessary information. Similarly, in Márquez's work, we are not shown someone with a European rationalist outlook on life being confronted with the inexplicable. We are in a world in which the marvellous is part of everyday life.

In the case of The Satanic Verses, however, we are taken into the heart of a former colonial power. The bureaucratization of violence we find in such a western post-Enlightenment country, principally through the state-controlled police force, is the context of Rushdie's most powerful political deployment of magic realism in this novel. As I shall argue below, the tables are

turned in this magic realism. Whereas it has been argued that Westerners only see the magical element in magical realist novels such as Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude and the many subsequent novels it has inspired in Latin America and elsewhere, in the incident in which Saladin Chamcha is arrested and driven away by British policemen, it is only the Indian (although he has reneged on his ethnic identity) Chamcha who is amazed at his metamorphosis into a caricature devil:

What puzzled Chamcha was that a circumstance which struck him as utterly bewildering and unprecedented--that is, his metamorphosis into this supernatural imp--was being treated by the others [the policemen] as if it were the most banal and familiar matter they could imagine. 'This isn't England,' he thought, not for the first or last time. How could it be, after all; where in all that moderate and common-sensical land was there room for such a police van in whose interior such events as these might plausibly transpire? (Rushdie 1988; 158)

Chamcha cannot believe that such events can befall him in England. He begins to wonder whether he is dead and existing in a kind of afterlife. However, he can discern no sign of a "Supreme Being, whether benevolent or malign" (Rushdie 1988; 158). He then hypothesizes that he survived the explosion of the "jumbo jet *Bostan*" (Rushdie 1988; 4), and is lying delirious in hospital. However, soon enough he feels a "sharp kick land on his ribs, painful and realistic enough to make him doubt the truth of all such hallucination-theories" (Rushdie 1988; 158), and he is forced to "return his attention to the actual, to this present comprising a sealed police van containing three immigration officers and five policemen that was, for the moment at any rate, all the universe he possessed"

(Rushdie 1988; 158-159).

Chamcha's refusal to believe that he could be demonised and mistreated in such a fashion in his beloved England is part, Rushdie seems to be arguing, of the reason it can occur there. He is forced to face the fact that this is happening to him, that his ideas of England have been shattered and replaced by a "universe of fear" (Rushdie 1988; 159). In the process his own ethnic and class prejudices are revealed. He becomes ashamed of his goatishness, considering "[s]uch degradations [to be] all very well for riff-raff from villages in Sylhet or the bicycle-repair shops of Gujranwala, but he was cut from different cloth!" (Rushdie 1988; 159).

It is important to note that while he has now accepted that what is happening to him is real, he resents the fact that it is happening to him, a man who had "gone to some lengths to become--a sophisticated man" (Rushdie 1988; 159). This implies that he does not object to such treatment *in principle*--only insofar as it is applied to someone who has adopted the standards of and attained legal status within English society. By his own standards Chamcha is a hypocrite to get upset when Farishta refuses to help a devil like himself.

There is also a deeper question inherent in this episode, the sort of question Rushdie feels it is the task of the novelist to tackle: what does the fact that English policemen and immigration officers mistreat and harrass those who are not protected by English law say about the sufficiency of a secular law system? This

is not necessarily to suggest an alternative system, but to remind us that such a system is not one that we can merely "believe in". Its officers are not divinely inspired. If we are to replace the fundamentalism of sacred law with a secular legal system, we must recognise the change, the fallibility of any such secular system. More fundamentally, we must admit our propensity as human beings to abuse such systems to our own advantage, and to turn a blind eye to their limitations, their shortcomings for others.

Once Chamcha manages to convince his captors to confirm his citizenship via a computer check on things like his motor registration number, they realize that (despite the fact that to them he looks like "a fucking Packy billy" (Rushdie 1988; 163)) they are in "a pretty effing pickle" (Rushdie 1988; 163). They knock him unconscious and deposit him in the "medical facility at the Detention Centre" (Rushdie 1988; 164). He discovers, on his first night in the detention centre, that it is full of people who have undergone similar metamorphoses to his own. "There is a woman over that way," he is informed by a manticore, "who is now mostly water-buffalo. There are businessmen from Nigeria who have grown sturdy tails. There is a group of holidaymakers from Senegal who were doing no more than changing planes when they were turned into slippery snakes" (Rushdie 1988; 168). Horrified, Chamcha wants to know "how they do it?". "They describe us," the other whispered solemnly. "That's all. They have the power of description, and we succumb to the pictures they construct" (Rushdie 1988; 168).

When the wolf, who along with the manticore is planning a break-

out, wants to know if Chamcha is on their side, the manticore answers that the new arrival is undecided: "[c]an't believe his own eyes, that's his trouble" (Rushdie 1988; 169). There is a considerable irony contained in this remark, for Chamcha has constructed an identity for himself as a "civilized" and rational man: "I am a man to whom certain things are of importance: rigour, self-discipline, reason, the pursuit of what is noble without recourse to that old crutch, God" (Rushdie 1988; 135), he reassures himself on recovering consciousness in his "new" life. Like the policemen who talk themselves into believing that they did not see a halo around Gibreel's head, he paradoxically reveals his rationalist fundamentalism in refusing to believe his eyes--the privileged source of realist interpretations.

Quite evidently, Rushdie has changed tack in his use of magic realism from the usage of the Latin Americans I have discussed. He is not as concerned with the problem of representation as they were. His focus is less on *representing* a particular and much misrepresented reality (while that is certainly a part of his project--although perhaps more so in Midnight's Children and Shame than in The Satanic Verses), than on the question of *interpretation*. To put it another way, whereas in magic signs and symbols are used to represent a deeper reality, power or entity, for the postmodernist thinker there is no such thing as depth. Reality comprises a collage of discourses, and s/he is primarily concerned with the politics of their interrelations. This need not make them a relativist, however.

Lori Chamberlain, in the context of an essay on "Paradoxes of Postmodern writing", characterises magic realism as fiction which "integrates both an attention to the real and to the power for the imagination to construct that reality" (Chamberlain 1986; 7). For Chamberlain, "magic realism serves an essential binding function in the larger context of postmodern writing, a binding that links the dailiness of realism and the risks of experimentalism" (Chamberlain 1986; 20-21).

Rushdie uses magical realist techniques such as the literalisation of metaphors, narrative hyperbole, exaggeration, and a politically-motivated Surrealistic juxtaposition of the horrific and the humorous, the sacred and the profane, to re-establish links between his readership and a world which they increasingly experience in a pre-packaged, disinfected and explained (as well as manipulated) form through the media. This is a world in which a massacre is "ranked" according to where it occurred (First or Third World?), and how "big" it was. Such strategies are very much in the tradition of Marquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude, which, McCafferey argues, "uses experimental strategies to discover new methods of re-connecting with the world outside the page, outside of language" (McCafferey 1986; xxv-xxvi).

In the case of Gibreel Farishta, much of the magic realism results from the leaking of his dream-world into his everyday life. He is pursued through England by the levitating spectre of Mrs Rekha Merchant on her magic carpet. For instance, on his way to London "Mrs Rekha Merchant floated up alongside his window, sitting

on her flying Bokhara, evidently impervious to the snowstorm that was building up out there and making England look like a television set after the day's programmes end" (Rushdie 1988; 194). Such instances of magic realism are explicable in psychological terms. Farishta's hallucinations (which are pursued mainly in the even chapters in the novel) are brought on by his uncertainty and guilt at his renouncing of Islam. Rekha, who commits suicide because of him, is described as "[r]etribution on a levitating rug" (Rushdie 1988; 194).

The fact that the apparition of Rekha which Farishta sees outside the train window (and it is important to note that it is only he who sees her--for even on their fall through the clouds together, Chamcha cannot see Rekha when Gibreel points her out to him (Rushdie 1988; 7) makes "England look like a television set" is part of Rushdie's extensive use of filmic devices in The Satanic Verses in order to call attention to the constructed nature of all discourses, including that of the novel itself. More importantly, perhaps, Rushdie extends it to include the discourse of revelation.

In Chapter Two Farishta is described like this: "Gibreel the dreamer, whose point of view is sometimes that of the camera and at other moments, spectator" (Rushdie 1988; 108). We are told that "mostly he sits up on Mount Cone like a paying customer in the dress circle, and Jahilia is his silver screen" (Rushdie 1988; 108). However, one day Mahound decides to ask him for advice in his new role as archangel, and all at once

he, Gibreel, is no longer a mere spectator but the central player, the star. With his old weakness for

taking too many roles: yes, yes, he's not only playing the archangel but also him, the businessman, the Messenger, Mahound, coming up the mountain when he comes. Nifty cutting is required to pull off this double role, the two of them may never be seen in the same shot, each must speak to empty air, to the imagined incarnation of the other, and trust to technology to create the missing vision, with scissors and Scotch tape or, more exotically, with the help of a travelling mat. Not to be confused ha ha with any magic carpet. (Rushdie 1988; 108)

Rushdie argues that the way we experience the world is shaped and controlled by the media, but extends the analogy to the processes of human consciousness. The "travelling mat" will facilitate the same end as the "magic carpet", and technology will "create the missing vision". In an analogous way, Rushdie argues, the human imagination can "create the missing vision".

In Rushdie's account, any substantive element to Mahound's visions is highly tenuous; it is, in the final analysis, mistaken. In the first Gibreel/Mahound visionary encounter, we are told that "Gibreel, who has been hovering-above-looking-down, feels a confusion, *who am I*, in these moments it begins to seem that the archangel is actually *inside the Prophet*, I am the dragging in the gut, I am the angel being extruded from the sleeper's navel, I emerge, Gibreel Farishta, while my other self, Mahound, lies *listening, entranced*" (Rushdie 1988; 110). The implication is that Mahound is in some way creating and/or controlling Gibreel, that they are in fact the same person. This seems to be confirmed in another revelatory passage: "and now the miracle starts in his [Mahound] my [Gibreel] our guts, he is straining with all his might at something, forcing something, and Gibreel begins to feel that strength

that force, here it is *at my own jaw* working it, opening shutting; and the power, starting within Mahound, reaching up to *my vocal cords* and the voice comes" (author's emphases, Rushdie 1988; 112).

Another interpretation is possible. Mahound has been trying to decide whether it is acceptable to recognise the status of Lat, Manna and Uzza as angels. He comes to the cave on Mount Cone to ask God's will on the matter. But, we are told, much to Gibreel's resentment, "*He* never turns up...[t]he one it's all about, Allah Ishvar God...[a]bsent as ever while we writhe and suffer in his name" (Rushdie 1988; 111). After Mahound's revelation, which confirms his desire to incorporate the three goddesses into the ranks of Allah's angels, Gibreel says the following: "Being God's postman is no fun, yaar. Butbutbut: God isn't in this picture. God knows whose postman I've been" (Rushdie 1988; 112).

In the original story of the Satanic verses, as told in the Islamic tradition, Muhammad's decision to confer angel-status on Lat, Manna and Uzza was inspired by Shaitan and not the archangel of the Lord. This was revealed to him in a subsequent revelation, and he repealed his previous decree on the issue. Rushdie's point is that the moral of this story should be that *all revelation is open to misinterpretation*. Or, more accurately, that all revealed doctrine should be open to re-interpretation: how do we (or angels, for that matter) know that other revelations were not false ones? The traditional explanation that this revelation was inspired by Shaitan, while presented in the "God's postman" speech, is not

borne out in Rushdie's novelistic recreation of the Satanic verses story, however.

After a confrontation with Hind, a devotee of Al-Lat, in which she reprimands him for his weakness in admitting Lat, Manna and Uzza to the divine fold, Mahound returns to the mountain. Gibreel tries to avoid sleep, to avoid the dream-sequence in which in subsequent dreams he witnesses (and is a pawn in) a version of the events surrounding the founding of Islam. However, "he's only human, in the end he falls down the rabbit-hole and there he is again, in Wonderland, up the mountain, and the businessman is waking up, and once again his wanting, his need, goes to work, not on my jaws and voice this time, but on my whole body" (Rushdie 1988; 122).

Muhammad wrestles with Gibreel until at last the (stronger and fitter) Mahound

throws the fight...it was what he wanted, it was his will filling me up and giving me the strength to hold him down, because archangels can't lose such fights, it wouldn't be right, it's only devils who get beaten in such circs, so the moment I got on top he started weeping for joy and then he did his old trick, forcing my mouth open and making the voice, the Voice, pour out of me once again, made it pour all over him, like sick.

(Rushdie 1988; 123)

By this stage (and Rushdie makes it even more obvious in later incidents in the Jahilia dream such as the case of the altered verses) it is clear that the visions Mahound has are dictated by his own deepest soul-searchings and desires.

Having recovered from his wrestling match and the ensuing vision, Mahound springs to his feet: "'It was the Devil,' he says

aloud to the empty air, making it true by giving it voice" (Rushdie 1988; 123). He races back to Jahilia to strike the diabolic verses from the record "for ever and ever, so that they will survive in just one or two unreliable collections of old traditions and orthodox interpreters will try and unwrite their story" (Rushdie 1988; 123). There is a problematic aspect to this interpretation of the Satanic verses affair, however:

Gibreel, hovering-watching from his highest camera angle, knows one small detail, just one tiny thing that's a bit of a problem here, namely that *it was me both times, baba, me first and second also me*. From my mouth, both the statement and the repudiation, verses and converses, universes and reverses, the whole thing, and we all know how my mouth got worked. (Rushdie 1988; 123)

The orthodox interpretation of the event resolves and thus denies the ambiguity inherent in revelation. It denies and leaves out of its considerations what Rushdie takes to be virtually a defining feature of human beings: doubt. Answering his question "what is the opposite of faith?" in the opening pages of Chapter Two, the (Satanic because he dare think such thoughts, ask such questions?) narrator rejects "disbelief" as an answer because that is itself a form of belief (Rushdie 1988; 92). Instead he posits doubt:

The human condition, but what of the angelic? Halfway between Allahgod and homosap, did they ever doubt? They did: challenging God's will one day they hid muttering beneath the Throne, daring to ask forbidden things: antiquesions... Freedom, the old antiques. He calmed them down... [f]lattered them...[a]nd hey presto, end of protest, on with the haloes, back to work. Angels are easily pacified; turn them into instruments and they'll play your harpy tune. Human beings are tougher nuts, can doubt anything, even the evidence of their own eyes. Of behind-their-own eyes. (Rushdie 1988; 92)

Beyond that, the orthodox interpretation undermines human beings' capacity for moral judgement, and institutes the very "Stalinist" oversimplifications Márquez criticizes in the Mendoza interview cited above. After Mahound has escaped persecution in Jahilia and fled to safety in Yathrib, Gibreel is left on the summit of Mount Cone, where he is attacked by "the three winged creatures, Lat Uzza Manat... He has no devil to repudiate. Dreaming, he cannot wish them away" (Rushdie 1988; 26).

The importance of the dream sequences for understanding Rushdie's use of magic realism lies in the fact that they are intended to dispel any doubt that while we experience reality in magical ways, this magic is part of the way individuals (influenced, certainly, by certain styles of interpretation) experience reality and should never be abstracted to become an absolute, privileged source of authority. This idea is explored on two levels in the book, on the level of the experiences of its characters (in particular Farishta and Alleluia Cone), and on the narrative level. I have examined some of Farishta's dream experiences above, experiences which increasingly intrude into his "real" life and drive him into a realm of fantasy and madness analogous to the (more peaceful) madness of José Arcadio Buendía. Gibreel is not tied harmlessly to a tree, however, and his delusions take place in the context of the "real" world, with tragic consequences for himself and those close to him (in his penultimate fit of madness he murders both Alleluia and Sisodia, and finally blows his own brains out with a pistol).

In the dream-sequence about the Satanic verses affair in the history of Islam, Mahound states categorically that "[f]irst it was the Devil... [b]ut this time, the angel, no question" (Rushdie 1988; 124). Gibreel is puzzled, however, as he knows that the Voice spoke through his lips both times, with "verses and converses". Does this necessitate an external source for the "Voice"? Rushdie argues not. Much further on in the novel, when Farishta has been tipped over the edge into madness by Chamcha's secret feeding of his insane jealousies, he comes across what he has come to visualise as "the enemy", the metaphysical opponent of his apocalyptic mission. He runs into Chamcha outside the burning Shandaar Cafe and suddenly realises what Chamcha has done, understands the source of the "host of evil voices" which whispered lies about Alleluia to him on the phone, the voices "beneath all of which Gibreel now discerns the unifying talent of the adversary" (Rushdie 1988; 463). This is not the sum of his revelation, however, it is a profounder realisation. Farishta

recognizes for the first time that the adversary has not simply adopted Chamcha's features as a disguise;--nor is this any case of paranormal possession, of body-snatching by an invader up from Hell; that, in short, the evil is not external to Saladin, but springs from some recess of his own true nature, that it has been spreading through his selfhood like a cancer, erasing what was good in him, wiping out his spirit... (Rushdie 1988; 463)

Rushdie calls the "idea of the self as being (ideally) homogeneous, non-hybrid, 'pure'" an "utterly fantastic notion" which "cannot, must not, suffice" (Rushdie 1988; 427). "No! Let's say an even harder thing: that evil may not be as far beneath our surfaces

as we like to say it is. --That, in fact, we fall towards it *naturally*, that is, *not against* our natures" (Rushdie 1988; 427). This is a profoundly humanist (and, in some respects, a Protestant Christian) position insofar as it locates the power for good and the potential for evil within the individual human being. This individual selfhood is not a pure and coherent entity, however, as it contains within it the possibilities, the potential, for good and for evil. As we have seen in the case of Saladin Chamcha, the imaginings of others, the force of circumstance, can mould this selfhood into something which would previously have seemed antithetical to its nature.

Rushdie distinguishes literature from religion and from politics for a similar reason. Whereas religion and politics, in Rushdie's view, "[seek] to privilege one language above all others, one set of values above all others, one text above all others, the novel has always been *about* the way in which different languages, values and narratives quarrel, and about the shifting relations between them, which are relations of power" (Rushdie 1991; 420). Rushdie in fact holds a very Kantian view of the possibilities of art. In his essay "Is Nothing Sacred?" he quotes Carlos Fuentes' question:

the question I have been asking myself throughout my life as a writer: *Can the religious mentality survive outside of religious dogma and hierarchy?* Which is to say: Can art be the third principle that mediates between the material and spiritual world; might it, by 'swallowing' both worlds, offer us something new--something that might even be called a secular definition of transcendence? I believe it can. I believe it must. And I believe that, at its best, it does.

(Rushdie 1991; 420)

This, then, is the project of Salman Rushdie's magic realism, to "'swallow' both worlds" and offer "something new", a means of recognising and living in a fractured and fragmentary world without succumbing to the desire to oversimplify it by imposing one overriding and unchallengeable discourse upon it. To avoid the temptation to a relativism which considers standards to be "inescapable expressions of a culture" (Gellner 1992; 49) and therefore unjudgable. In a postmodern world, a postcolonial and post-war world in which vast numbers of people have moved from the former colonies to the former imperial centres, and in which the nations established in accordance with former colonial boundaries have little or no relation to ethnic demographics, this kind of cultural exclusivism and moral relativism can only lead to anarchy. Rushdie attempts a "secular definition of transcendence" through his magic realism as a means of grappling with such a world.

I have discussed Rushdie's ideas in The Satanic Verses about the need to resist appealing to a supernatural or too-abstract source of authority in going about comprehending, inhabiting and interacting with the world on the level of the characters in the text. It is vital now to examine these ideas on the narrative level--by which I mean the status the text confers upon its narrator/s and by inference upon itself. This is vital in order to answer the charge that Rushdie's attempt to find a secular definition of transcendence amounts, in his own words, to a "secular fundamentalism [which] is as likely to lead to excesses, abuses and oppressions as the canons of religious faith" (Rushdie 1991; 418).

As I have mentioned above, there are many narratorial interventions in the text, in which the narrating voice often suggests that he may be Shaitan. To be more accurate, the narratorial voice assumes that it will be judged Satanic. For instance, after its speech on "doubt" cited above, the voice has this to say: "I know; devil talk. Shaitan interrupting Gibreel. Me?" (Rushdie 1988; 93). My thesis is that this narratorial voice should not, cannot be classified according to the absolutist and Manichean philosophy of the Imam. This philosophy is well expressed in the following outburst of the crazed Gibreel in the fevered grip of his religious delusion: "truth is extreme, it is so and not thus, it is him and not her; a partisan matter" (Rushdie 1988; 354).

"No more of these England-induced ambiguities, these Biblical-Satanic confusions" raves Gibreel, "--Clarity, clarity, at all costs clarity!" (Rushdie 1988; 353). Rushdie has him invoke the ultimate religious paradox: the conflicting doctrines of the freedom of will and the doctrine of predestination. "This Shaitan was no fallen angel" asserts Gibreel, "'he wasn't an angel at all...[h]e was of the djinn, so he transgressed.' --Quran 18:50, there it was as plain as the day. --How much more practical, down-to-earth, comprehensible! --Iblis/Shaitan standing for the darkness, Gibreel for the light" (Rushdie 1988; 353).

It is exactly this sort of tyranny, the tyranny of the Imam who asserts that "[h]istory is a deviation from the Path, knowledge is a delusion, because the sum of knowledge was complete on the day Allah finished his revelation to Mahound" (Rushdie 1988; 210), that

Rushdie wishes to oppose and to avoid falling into himself. That the narrator figure who oversees the action in the novel ("I know the truth, obviously...I watched the whole thing" (Rushdie 1988; 10)), who plays no little part in the miraculous events with which the novel begins and around which it revolves ("[h]igher powers had taken an interest... and such powers (I am, of course, talking about myself) have a mischievous, almost a wanton attitude to tumbling flies" (Rushdie 1988; 133)), cannot be pinned down and classified according to stable and absolute categories is made clear in the episode in which Gibreel sees the "Supreme Being" (Rushdie 1988; 318).

Gibreel's

vision of the Supreme Being was not abstract in the least. He saw, sitting on the bed, a man of about the same age as himself, of medium height, fairly heavily built, with salt-and-pepper beard cropped close to the line of the jaw. What struck him most was that the apparition was balding, seemed to suffer from dandruff and wore glasses. This was not the Almighty he had expected. 'Who are you?' he asked with interest.

(Rushdie 1988; 318)

In fact, the description fits the photograph of the man on the dust-jacket of The Satanic Verses: Salman Rushdie. We are told that this "was not the almighty he had expected". In fact, Gibreel was not expecting the "Almighty" at all, as is obvious from his question "[w]ho are you?". The narrator pre-empts his question with the information that he is addressing it to the "Almighty". Thus it is revealed that the "Almighty" of this fictional universe is Salman Rushdie, and not some absolute power (whether for good or for evil).

Rushdie identifies himself as "Ooparvala... The Fellow Upstairs" (Rushdie 1988; 318):

'How do I know you're not the other One,' Gibreel asked craftily, 'Neechayvala, the Guy from Underneath? A daring question, eliciting a snappish reply. This Deity might look like a myopic scrivener [another clue to his real identity], but It could certainly mobilize the traditional apparatus of divine rage...

(Rushdie 1988; 319)

Of course he can, just as he could make Saladin and Gibreel fall from twenty-nine thousand and two feet and land up safe on the English coast (and of course, historically, excite a quite different sort of rage!). "We are not obliged to explain Our nature to you" the apparition thunders, "[w]hether we be multiform, plural, representing the union-by-hybridization of such opposites as *Oopar* and *Neechay*, or whether We be pure, stark, extreme, will not be resolved here" (Rushdie 1988; 319).

In another narratorial intrusion much later on in the novel, the voice (or shall we say Voice) is equally evasive:

[d]on't ask me to clear things up one way or the other; the time of revelations is long gone. The rules of Creation are pretty clear: you set things up, you make them thus and so, and then you let them roll. Where's the pleasure if you're always intervening to give hints, change the rules, fix the fights? Well, I've been pretty self-controlled up to this point and I don't plan to spoil things now. Don't think I haven't wanted to butt in; I have, plenty of times. And once, it's true, I did. I sat on Alleluia Cone's bed and spoke the superstar, Gibreel. *Ooparvala* or *Neechayvala*, he wanted to know, and I didn't enlighten him; I certainly don't intend to blab to this confused Chamcha instead. (Rushdie; 1988; 409)

This may be taken as a fair summation of Rushdie's credo as an author. It is also an admission of his role in the creation of the novel, and a refusal of the kind of simplifications implied in

Gibreel's wanting to know whether he is "Ooparvala or Neechayvala".

In both Midnight's Children and Shame, echoing Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude, the narratives end with the destruction of the worlds they have created. This is a kind of acknowledgement of their fictionality, and a reminder that the realities they depict have not (yet) materialised historically. That, perhaps, is still to be done, and the books are not meant to sublimate the desire to bring about real changes (rather to instigate and nourish it). The Satanic Verses, however, does not end this way. In fact it ends on a positive note with Saladin Chamcha's decision to embrace his Indianness and become Salahuddin Chamchawala once more.

The epistemological confusions portrayed in the novel, Rushdie seems to be saying, are to be found in the world we inhabit, and we can live in this world without subjecting it to grand and absolutist narratives or letting its multifariousness destroy us (as it did Gibreel who could not bend). Salahuddin, significantly, chooses to return to India. But this is not some sort of homogeneous Ur-India. On the plane journey back to India he reads about "the latest 'bride suicide'" (Rushdie 1988; 517), "an armaments scandal" (Rushdie 1988; 518), and that "communalism, sectarian tension, was omnipresent, as if the gods were going to war" (Rushdie 1988; 518). This return is not an escape to Wonderland.

Nevertheless, the difficulties in the magic realist aesthetic persist. Has Rushdie merely replaced a foundationalism predicated

on the substantive magical dimension of a particular reality with one predicated on a particular style of interpretation which one could characterise as magical? Does Chamcha's return to Indianness mean that there are "authentic" (and hence unauthentic) styles of interpretation, based on cultural norms (which must be interrogated, but nevertheless preserved), and how does this fit with the relativism suggested by other sections of The Satanic Verses?

Rushdie in fact argues explicitly against the idea of "types" of self (Rushdie 1988; 427). I think the importance of Chamcha's return to India (and we need, perhaps, to get away from politically loaded interpretations of his Indianness to appreciate this), has more to do with his giving up of his intolerant denial of his Indian roots (and the relief from the obligation of trying to resolve his familial difficulties this affords him (2)), than with any claim that he is in some sense intrinsically "Indian".

Saladin gives up the inflexible mask (and refuge) of his previous identity, cast in the mould of what he perceives to be an essential "Englishness", and so opens himself up to the possibility of newness. A touch ironically, he finds the principle source of his new-found happiness in his love for his childhood Indian friend Zeenat Vakil. And he achieves, in the moving closing section of the novel, a form of secular transcendence in his reconciliation with his father, Changez Chamchawalla.

Rushdie defines "transcendence" to be "that flight of the spirit outside the confines of its material, physical existence which all of us, secular or religious, experience on at least a few occa-

sions" (Rushdie 1991; 421). He names the moment of birth, the "exaltation of the act of love, the experience of joy and very possibly the moment of death" as instances of moments in which we experience transcendence. For Saladin it is death which enables him to overcome a "lifetime of tangled relationships with his father" (Rushdie 1988; 511). He arrives at his old home full of bitter thoughts, but to his profound surprise and joy discovers that

[t]o fall in love with one's father after the long angry decades was a serene and beautiful feeling: a renewing, life-giving thing, Saladin wanted to say, but did not, because it would sound vampirish; as if by sucking this new life out of his father he was making room, in Changez's body, for death. Although he kept it quiet, however, Saladin felt hourly closer to many old, rejected selves, many alternative Saladins--or rather Salahuddins--which had split off from himself as he made his various life choices, but which had apparently continued to exist, perhaps in the parallel universes of quantum theory. (Rushdie 1988; 523)

Rushdie argues that it is one of the tasks of literature to "capture [the] experience [of transcendence], to offer it to... its readers; to be, for a secular, materialist culture, some sort of replacement for what the love of god offers in the world of faith" (Rushdie 1991; 421). It is the end of art, then, to effect what one could call a "re-enchantment" of the world for the "secular, materialist culture" of the West.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, Rushdie's The Satanic Verses signals a profound shift within the nature of the definition of magic realism which concerns me in this study. On a textual level, the change is most visible in the intrusion of the author into the narrative and the consequently self-reflexive nature of the text. Rushdie meditates within the text on how other discourses will judge him according to their interpretations of his fictional strategies. As subsequent history has borne out, he was correct in assuming that religious fundamentalists would identify his scepticism with Shaitan, and judge him accordingly.

In the Latin American magic realism of Carpentier and Márquez, we have seen that the magical aspect of this aesthetic incorporated (and was in a measure founded upon) a belief (or a faith?) in a substantive magical dimension to Latin American reality. They both (Márquez less comfortably) maintained a belief in a "Latin American reality", however internally fragmented such a reality might be, and the magical element they attributed to this reality played a large role in maintaining the coherence of their conception of their continent/region. For Rushdie, in a postmodern moment, such a faith and such a coherence would seem to be impossible.

The lesson that Saladin Chamcha learns from his arrest and metamorphosis on arriving in England is surely that reality is not something one can pin to a map, to a place. It is shaped, rather, by the magical powers of the human imagination, the "power of

description" (Rushdie 1988; 168) which turns him into a sulphurous caricature of the devil. In the same way that, on a textual level, the policemen turn Chamcha into a devil-caricature, Rushdie as author can do the same. Similarly, Rushdie is surely arguing, real policemen make monsters of the immigrants they harrass. What really confuses Chamcha is that this imaginary world in which he is imagined to be a stinking and bestial demon-caricature can co-exist (and has collided) with his own imaginary "moderate and common-sensical" England (Rushdie 1988; 158).

The magical is then, for Rushdie as well as Carpentier and Márquez, a profoundly ambivalent force. It has historically combined a commitment to the profoundest concerns and needs of humanity with an atomism, an individualism which is both anti-social and resistant to institutionalisation. As such it has ultimately proven of more use to magic realists as a means of exploring alternative interpretations of reality and definitions of identity, of attacking, augmenting and ridiculing the discourses of Enlightenment rationalism and conservative sacred traditions such as fundamentalist Islam, than as a means of accessing a substantive identity (for the individual or for a continent) or creating a foundation for an ethics of the imagination.

Francois Duvalier, a Negro physician and intellectual who ruled Haiti from 1957-1971 had tried to politicize Vodou. His attempt was a failure, because Vodou lacked any form of hierarchy he could exploit to centralise control over it (Baur 1974; 626). It was thus a failure as a tool of revolution, yet had been (and continues to

be) a longstanding inspiration to rebellion against tyranny in Haitian history. As I have argued above, I think that, ultimately, one can make analogous claims about the political intentions and potential of the magic realism of those novelists I have examined in this study: namely that they explore and celebrate the diversity and fertility of the human imagination and attack those individuals or systems which attempt to simplify, limit and dominate it--without themselves providing a blue-print for interpretation.

The three novels I have based my study upon all represent a struggle (more marked in Carpentier's and Márquez's cases) with the conflicting discourses of Enlightenment rationalism and the magical, a struggle which they could not resolve. The protean nature of the magical and their honesty as novelists frustrated their attempts to provide models for a "New World". Instead, through providing an arena in which the interrelations of the conventionally antithetical discourses of the "magical" and of "realism" may be examined, they have provided a space for the possibility of newness.

None succeeded in becoming either sacred or secular prophets (despite Carpentier's aspirations to the status of a sort of literary shaman, and Márquez's ambiguous--and perhaps tongue-in-cheek?--claims to be something of a "seer"). At the end of his essay entitled "Is Nothing Sacred", Rushdie finds himself "backing away from the idea of sacralizing literature with which I flirted at the beginning of this text; I cannot bear the idea of the writer as secular prophet" (Rushdie 1991; 427). He argues that "[l]iterat-

ure is made at the frontier between the self and the world, and in the act of creation that frontier softens, becomes permeable, allows the world to flow into the artist and the artist to flow into the world. Nothing so inexact, so easily and frequently misconceived, deserves the protection of being declared sacrosanct" (Rushdie 1991; 427). Thus, in his opinion, "[t]he only privilege literature deserves--and this privilege it requires in order to exist--is the privilege of being the arena of discourse, the place where the struggle of languages can be acted out" (Rushdie 1988; 427).

The desire to achieve a more holistic vision of reality which I have traced through certain magical traditions--via Idealism in philosophy and one of its heirs in the European modernist literary tradition, Surrealism, to Latin American magic realism as manifested in Carpentier's The Kingdom of this World and Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude--is finally discarded in the postmodern moment of Salman Rushdie's magic realism in The Satanic Verses. It gives way to a picture of the world probably much closer to Borges's vision of a universe constituted by the myriad hordes of humanity, each of whom is conceived as a "little Aristotelian god" conjuring from the chaos of reality the worlds they inhabit. Of course what Rushdie's magic realism retains from that of writers like Carpentier and Márquez is the concern with the political forces which determine and prescribe and proscribe our interpretations of the world which, protean as it may be, we all (as Saladin Chamcha painfully discovered) inhabit.

As Rushdie concludes: "[l]iterature is an interim report from the consciousness of the artist" (Rushdie 1991; 427), and each "great book" is a chapter in humanity's struggle to come to grips with the protean and multi-dimensional "struggle of language" in which it is inescapably embroiled. The term "magic realism" describes an aesthetic which provides an arena for the centuries-old and only provisionally resolvable struggle between the imaginative needs of the individual human psyche and the need to create "one law for the lion and the ox" in order to enable human beings to live together in a (relatively) civil society.

Notes to Chapter Two

- 1) Freud was deeply influenced by literary figures, and Anthony Storr notes that "in Freud's collected works there are more references to Goethe and Shakespeare than there are to the writings of any psychiatrist" (Storr 1989; 6).

In Civilization and its Discontents Freud writes that "[i]n what was at first my utter perplexity, I took as my starting-point a saying of the poet-philosopher, Schiller, that 'hunger and love are what moves the world'" (Freud 1946; 54).

- 2) Echevarría remarks that

[a]nthropology is a way through which Western culture indirectly affixes its own identity. This identity, which the anthropologist struggles to shed, is one that masters non-historical cultures through knowledge, by making them the object of its study. Anthropology translates into the language of the West the cultures of others and in the process establishes its own form of self-knowledge through a kind of annihilation of the self. ...it is only through an awareness of the other that Western thought can pretend to wind back to the origin of being. The natives... provide the model for this reduction and beginning. The native has timeless stories to explain his changeless society. These stories, these myths, are like those of the West before they became a mythology instead of a theogony. Freud, Frazer, Jung and Heidegger sketch a return to, or a retention of, these origins. Anthropology finds them in the contemporary world of the native.
(Echevarría 1990; 13-14)

- 3) Freud writes in his Civilization and its Discontents that he has:

endeavoured to guard [him]self against the enthusiastic prejudice which holds that our civilization is the most precious thing that we possess or could acquire and that its path will necessarily lead to heights of unimagined perfection.
(Freud 1946; 81)

However, he makes it clear that he does not believe that primitive society is Edenic:

As regards the primitive people who exist today, careful researches have shown that their instinctual life is by no means to be envied for its freedom. It is subject to restrictions of a different kind but perhaps of greater severity than those attaching to modern civilized man.
(Freud 1946; 52)

- 4) cf. Georges Sorel's Reflections on Violence (1908).
- 5) Although Breton's refusal to adhere to Communist dogma alienated him from this revolutionary movement.
- 6) Freud writes, for instance, that "psychic reality is a particular form of existence which must not be confused with material reality" (in Balakian 1959; 102).
- 7) Let me give a South African example to illustrate this point: some South African traditional leaders uphold a status quo in which women are second-class citizens. If we suppose that we have no right to judge them because we are doing so from the perspective of a different value-system, then we must grant them their wishes to persist in the subjugation of women and except these women from the full protection of the law of the land. This is clearly unacceptable.

Notes to Chapter Three

- 1) For instance Asturias who wrote his Légendes de Guatemala in Paris under the influence of his ethnological studies with Georges Reynard (cf. Echevarría 1977; 118).
- 2) Donald Shaw writes that "[i]n Havana, nanigo is a black brotherhood, originally of slaves, based on magic and ritual..." (Shaw 1985; 7).
- 3) In fact he was later to admit that although he had "witnessed Nanigo ceremonies as a young man...their real significance had been deftly concealed from him" (Shaw 1985; 7).
- 4) America has been described as female since the earliest European explorers landed on her shores (see for instance Mario Klarer's essay entitled "Woman and Arcadia: The Impact of Ancient Utopian Thought on the Early Image of America" (in Journal of American Studies 1993; 1-17)).
- 5) Breton had similar ideas. In a discussion of early books on Surrealism Balakian mentions Jules Monnerot, "a native of the South Pacific French colonies" (Balakian 1971; 269), relating that this was "a fact which made him highly attractive to Breton" (Balakian 1971; 269). This was because he had been

brought up in a place where French culture was superimposed on a more primitive culture, which, according to Breton, had closer communion with nature and was more intimately involved with the basic principles of existence, human sensibility, and man's relationship to the rest of creation.

(Balakian 1971; 269)

Breton thought that someone like Monnerot enjoyed both

the advantage of sharing the convenient qualities of French civilization: the language, the literary frame of reference, the spirit of free thought-- despite the fact, according to Breton, that free thought had for a long time been waging a losing battle in France--

(Balakian 1971; 269)

and having

kept in tune with the basic ethnic character of their native land, with its more genuine and natural mysticism, which made religion in the primitive sense of the word a part of social reality. To [Breton's] great joy these concepts were expressed in Monnerot's book [La Poesie moderne et le sacre], which aimed to demonstrate that the monistic view of existence inherent in surrealism was very akin to the attitudes of the primitive mind (what Levi-Strauss calls the "savage mind") that accepted the real and the so-called supernatural as a continuum and part of an over-all harmony (Balakian 1971; 269)

- 6) Balakian relates that "the Surrealists' concern and subject was the condition of man, his reception of the data of his senses, in the face of the colossal enigma of his ageless non-historical destiny." (Balakian 1971; 101)
- 7) His visit moved him to write that "in [Latin] America surrealism is an everyday, commonplace, habitual thing" (in Shaw 1985; 27).
- 8) "'Faustic' is a word Carpentier had learned from Spengler.

It meant, as he wrote in 1930, 'full of longing for liberty, for the infinite and the mysterious,' as distinct from the 'Apollonian,' which implied clinging to form and exactitude" (Shaw 1985; 27).

9) I should perhaps briefly say that the task of creating political unity in the Caribbean, where the majority of the population was displaced--whether from Spain or France or various parts of Africa, or a mixture of these--was a particularly difficult one. On the mainland of Latin America there had been wars and sporadic revolts--such as that led by José Gabriel Condorcanqui (the "Marquis of Oropesa"), who claimed direct descent from the Inca rulers (Crow 1992; 405)--organised around ethnic solidarities since the earliest times.

10) Although accounts of their perceptions of the history of this period, as well as of their religious beliefs and customs do exist, and were utilised by Carpentier. An example cited by Echevarría is the

Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie française de l'Isle de Saint-Méry, published in 1797 in Philadelphia by Moreau de Saint-Méry ('that ruddy, pleasure-loving lawyer of the Cap. Moreau de Saint-Méry,' as Carpentier calls him in [The Kingdom of this World])

(Echevarría 1977; 133)

11) We must recall from Chapter One that Mesoamerican sacred traditions divided the world into four segments. We must also recall Lopez Austin's explanation of their structures

of space and time:

an hour of the day was characterised by being a moment of night or day, by the influence of a sign (one among twenty daty names) and a number (one among thirteen) in a cycle of 260 days; by the group of thirteen to which it belongs; by its month (among eighteen) and its position within the month (among twenty); by the year (among fifty-two) which in its turn was marked by the destiny of a sign (among four) and a number (thirteen); and so on successively, through the sequece of other cycles...

(in Carrasco 1990; 57)

Carpentier's The Kingdom of this World is divided into four parts and contains twenty-six chapters. The half-way point of the novel (the end of Chapter Five of Part Two) falls on page fifty-two.

Notes to Chapter Four

1) André Bello argued in an essay entitled "Historical Method" (1848) that a "science" of history based on the meticulous collection and correlation of data was inappropriate for a continent where so little of such basic historical data existed. He argued that "[w]hen a country's history doesn't exist, except in incomplete, scattered documents, in vague traditions that must be compiled and judged, the narrative method is obligatory" (in Sommer 1991; 8). He advocated personal invention over "scientific" method, allowing history to be created out of personal passions rather than pretensions to objectivity. Hence the value of narrative, to fill in the many gaps in existing historical knowledge as well as to create authentic local expression.

2) It is difficult to give exact dates here: Michael Wood notes that "when [la Violencia] was said to be over, or more or less under control, in 1962, there were still two hundred civilian deaths a month" (Wood 1990; 9).

3) "*Cachacos*" -- "a word used by the people of the coastal regions to describe the people from the cities of the Altiplano [the mountainous regions of Colombia], especially Bogotá" (Mendoza 1983; 40).

"The Andean world of mist, drizzle and cold winds unfolds in a subtle range of greys and melancholy greens... The

mountain Colombians... are marked by Castilian traditionalism and the taciturn, mistrustful character of the Chibcha Indian, a people of subtle reserve and formality." (Mendoza 1983; 40)

- 4) The destruction of Macondo at the end of the novel can also be read as an ironic comment on the "realism" of official accounts of Colombian history which attempted to elide the 1928 massacre from popular memory. Macondo in Márquez's fictional account is the site of the massacre which the authorities tried to "conjure" out of existence.

Notes for Chapter Five

- 1) In 1915 U.S. naval forces restored order in a chaotic Haiti, and

for the next nineteen years the U.S. guided Haiti... Always unpopular with Haitians, the American occupation became distasteful to the American public as well, and two investigating commissions appointed in 1930 recommended withdrawal. Americans had wounded Haitian pride and failed to reduce monoculture or solve the educational needs of the common people, but the Garde d'Haiti, a well-trained constabulary, brought order. The last marines left Haiti in August 1934. (Baur 1974; 271)

- 2) "Almost twenty years earlier, when the young and newly renamed Saladin was scratching a living on the margins of the London theatre, in order to maintain a safe distance from his father..." (Rushdie 1988; 514).

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